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The Nation.

March 10, 1984 $1.25; U.K. 65p

MAR 8 1984

ORIAL

..E'VE GOTTA HAVE HART?

Gary Hart's startling victory in the New Hampshire primary should warn Democrats that Walter Mondale's labor-liberal coalition ignores crucial components. Young and independent voters produced Hart's plurality, burying the best efforts of unions and women's organizations to get out the vote for Mondale. Many members of those groups broke ranks and joined the coalition of Democrats who feel that the old party no longer speaks for their concerns or meets their needs.

Seen that way, the primary is less a harbinger of Hart's ultimate success than a sign of upheaval within the party. The regulars—represented by Mondale—have paid little attention to the strategies advocated by Jesse Jackson and grass-roots community workers, who insist that traditional mass organizations have shrinking bases and diminishing support. Hart was an available alternative for New Hampshire Democrats detached from the regular machinery, but it is entirely possible that Mondale could move to attract those who are similarly disaffected in other states. The game is nowhere near its end.

Hart's attraction has been primarily as a symbol of novelty, youth and vision. Nothing he has said or done so far indicates what, if any, substance stands beyond the symbolism. His most visible "new idea" is the concept of new ideas itself, much as a new detergent hypes its newness and nothing else. Reporters who asked poll-exiting voters why they liked Hart came away with an array of descriptions but few facts. Like the neoliberalism with which he is associated, Hart appears to be an adjective in search of a noun.

The totemic quality of the New Hampshire primary has got out of hand. A hundred thousand voters in a New England snowstorm do not nominate a national candidate, and the real political work of the campaign is only beginning.

SORRY, THE PRESIDENT IS DISENGAGED
Calvin Trillin

RON AND TIP
Christopher Hitchens

WEST BANK 'FACTS'
Robert Ross

WHAT FREUD REPRESSED
Judith Herman

JUST DESMOND AND MOLLY
Daniel Menaker

'FEMININITY'
Laura Shapiro

LETTER FROM EUROPE

MITTERRAND: MIDDLE OF THE JOURNEY

DANIEL SINGER

On March 21, French President François Mitterrand arrives in the United States for a three-day state visit. When he was elected President in May 1981, he was the subject of great hope. Now he is the source of deep disappointment. His victory was hailed as the rebirth of democratic socialism. Now, at the midpoint of his presidency, his failures are being cited as proof that socialism is a myth.

First let me attempt to destroy the great illusion, the mistaken belief that an attempt to build socialism in France has failed. Then I shall take up two questions I was asked frequently during a recent visit to New York City: How can a Socialist leader be Reagan's most useful European friend? and How can a country with a radical tradition remain relatively aloof from the European nuclear disarmament movement?

Requiem for Social Democracy

Socialism has often been condemned for sins it did not commit. For a long time it has suffered from guilt by association with Soviet Communism. Now it is being blamed for the failures of social democracy.

The inability of the French Socialists and the supposedly socialist governments in southern Europe to cope with the current economic malaise is being triumphantly presented as proof that the socialist alternative to capitalism is a failure. *The New York Times* ran a series of articles last November and December showing that in Paris and Rome, in Madrid, Lisbon and Athens, Socialist dreams had foundered on political realities.

(*Continued on Page 286*)

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LETTERS.

'A GREAT LEAP FORWARD'

Los Angeles
The Nation took a great leap forward when it hired Alexander Cockburn. I shall look forward to his witty prose gracing the pages of the magazine. *E. Bradford Burns*

Los Angeles
Alexander Cockburn has committed far more serious errors than accepting money from the Institute of Arab Studies. He has accepted money from *House & Garden* for which he writes columns about Irish castles and dude ranches in Utah. Doesn't this create a potential conflict of interest? Does Navasky really expect "press critic" Cockburn to tell the truth about the evil empire of Condé Nast while he is in the pay of the "Magazine of Creative Living"?

Thanks for signing him on; life without his column these past weeks has been hell.
Jon Wiener

San Francisco
The Cockburn editorial was just right, politically and esthetically ["About Cockburn . . . ," *The Nation*, Feb. 18]. Cockburn's column proved that when columns are outlawed *The Nation* will continue its glorious tradition of picking up great writing cheap. Thanks. Please do run that classified. *Daniel Ben-Horin*
Executive Director, Media Alliance

GIVING THE DEVIL HIS DUE

New York City
I am sorry that *The Nation* has hired Alexander Cockburn. A press critic who judges the behavior and ethics of other journalists must live by stricter standards than they if he is to have credibility. I find it ironic and depressing that *The Nation* justified its decision partly by the cynical comments of a *Wall Street Journal* editor. I only hope Cockburn's column will not hurt the magazine's credibility. *Herbert J. Gans*

Nashville
The editorial on Alexander Cockburn is unforgivable. For *The Nation* to maintain any sort of impact it must retain moral credibility. Hiring Cockburn might be acceptable if he were to accept blame; failure to do so causes me to wish to have nothing else to do with *The Nation*. Please cancel my subscription immediately. *Dan J. Schulman*

ABRAM: RIGHTING CIVIL RIGHTS

New York City
I resisted replying to William L. Taylor's "Farewell, Civil Rights Commission" [*The Nation*, Feb. 4] until specifically invited by editor Navasky. So herewith.

Taylor calls me a neoconservative, thus seizing the liberal standard from positions like mine to plant it in his opposing ideological ground. "Liberal" to me means now, as always, equality before the law, equality of opportunity and equality of esteem. "Equal" means weighing each individual's worth and accomplishments with thumbs off the scale; it means the denial of rights to status and rank—rights by ascription, whether through titles of nobility or recognition of race—as a condition for government favor.

I am for affirmative action—perhaps I was one of the earliest to use the term—meaning the taking of active steps to advance *individuals* who were overlooked or behind the starting line in life's race and to accord them the education, counseling, training and remedial help as can be usefully assimilated. If there is a difference of principle between Taylor and me, it is that I recognize that not all blacks and surely not all women are poor or disadvantaged; it is unjust to confer on blacks or women benefits taken from other groups who may need them more.

Taylor charges me with inconsistency by singling out a case in which I professionally represent a client whose housing project has been praised by integrationists no less distinguished than Kenneth Clark.

Taylor misrepresents me when he says that at the confirmation hearing I "went down the line with the Administration." As he was present, he should know that I disagreed with the Administration on school prayer, abortion and other issues to the extent that Senator Arlen Specter finally asked, "Would you be surprised if your nomination was withdrawn?" To which I replied, "I would be surprised, I suppose . . . and if I am confirmed there will be a man on the commission who will state his views as candidly in every forum as I have stated them here today."

Taylor, on the other hand, was embarrassed when Senator Orrin Hatch reminded him that as general counsel to the commission in the Johnson years, he had advised commissioners that they should submit their resignations on the advent of the new President.

Taylor's strictures mean far less to me than the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr.'s recommendation to the Judiciary Committee urging my confirmation "without delay."
Morris B. Abram, Vice Chairman
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

TAYLOR REPLIES

Washington
(1) Morris B. Abram's response to my assertion that he is inconsistent in advocating quotas in the Starrett City case while opposing such remedies in fair employment cases is no response at all. If the views of Kenneth Clark on Starrett City are Abram's guideposts in these matters, why does he not adopt Clark's position on other aspects of affirmative action?

(2) As to the views expressed by Abram at his confirmation hearing, he has a point. A more complete statement by me would have been that Abram went down the line with the Administration on all matters within the jurisdiction of the Civil Rights Commission, including school desegregation, fair employment, the Equal Rights Amendment, the Voting Rights Act and even the Administration's views about the need for new legislation to end tax subsidies to segregated private schools. Senator Specter gave Abram an opportunity to demonstrate his independence, but Abram did not take it. After the hearing, Specter asked the President to withdraw the nominations and then became a leading advocate of measures to protect the agency's independence.

(3) I wasn't embarrassed by a "reminder" that I had advised commissioners during the Johnson Administration that they should submit their resignations on the request of the President, for the simple reason that I gave no such advice. Senator Hatch had me confused with another commissioner.

What impresses me about Abram's letter is that he does not dispute in any material way my account of the Reagan takeover of the commission. In fact, the decision made by Abram and his colleagues at the commission's January 16 meeting to stake out their policies first and find the facts to support them later is perhaps the most eloquent testimony to what the Reagan Administration has done to the commission. It's sad.
William L. Taylor

CORRECTIONS

Due to editorial errors the following emendations are necessary:

In Andrew Kopkind's March 3 report from Managua, "Sandinista Fiesta," the number of rebels in Augusto César Sandino's army should have been 3,000.

The figure for the average annual amount of aid the Netherlands supplied to Suriname from 1975 to 1982, cited in Clifford Krauss's February 11 report, "Suriname Zigs Left, Zags Right," should have read $110 million.

The article "Democracy First, Then Revolution," in the same issue, should not have implied that the author, Lucy Komisar, doubted the veracity of a government spokesman's statement that a poll showed 65 percent of Spain's population favored restrictive abortion laws.

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EDITORIALS.

Jackson Brothers

Two Jacksons dominate the media and demand attention as the American winter wanes. Michael, the hero, makes millions, grabs Grammys, peddles Pepsi and confirms the cliché that with luck and pluck any poor wretch can achieve fame and fortune. Jesse, the villain, instigates insurgence, divides Democrats, insults Jews and symbolizes the stereotype of the black activist as a dangerous outsider.

But deep in the structure of American society they have more in common than their superficial differences suggest. White America casts blacks in ritual roles: entertainer, athlete, spellbinder, fox and witch. There they may find success but there they are trapped, caught in a cultural ghetto as restricted as any inner city, and they risk everything if they try to break free. Muhammad Ali, Paul Robeson, Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Malcolm X, Father Divine, Billie Holiday: they are accused of draft dodging, radicalism, corruption, drug abuse, crackpotism, racism, anti-Semitism, egotism. Within the bounds of good taste or even the canons of the law they may well be miscreants. But their real crime—the one for which they are pursued, if not prosecuted—is a failure to stay within the confines of their roles.

Jesse Jackson was morally slack and politically foolish in the "hymie" affair, and his "cleansing confession" came too late to cancel the damage he did. But any mistake would have served his enemies equally well, for their campaign to devalue Jackson's candidacy is aimed at the movement he leads and the threat it presents. Jackson is out of bounds; he makes demands about class, race, privilege and power that

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are unique in modern major party politics. It is hardly surprising that those who feel the threat will take the first opportunity to disarm it.

Michael Jackson has made the most of his part—more than anyone of his generation. With his eight Grammy awards, he is the living definition of *hot*, and the heat he generates comes from the combustion of cultural styles at the point of crossover—when black and white merge in one media moment without threat, danger or dependence. But for all the glitter and the celebrity, he cannot leap the wall beyond his role; they'll get him, too, if he tries.

Fire in the Gulf

In an effort to break the eighteen-month stalemate in the Persian Gulf war, Iran has launched an offensive. Its forces struck in southern Iraq, near the port of Basra, suffering heavy losses. In the north they are poised to drive toward the Darbandikhan hydroelectric dams—the source of two-fifths of Baghdad's electricity—and the oil pipeline that runs to the Turkish port of Dörtyol.

Since the pipeline is the only outlet for Iraqi crude, its loss would cripple the country's faltering economy. The repercussions could drive President Saddam Hussein to attempt to destroy the Iranian port at Kharg Island with airborne French Exocet missiles and land-based Soviet SS-12s, which have a range of nearly 500 miles. Iran would then probably retaliate by blocking the Strait of Hormuz, stopping oil shipments from all the producing states in the region. That prospect sent prices on the spot market skyrocketing last week.

On February 23, two days after the withdrawal of U.S. marines from Lebanon began, Washington criticized the British government for permitting the sale of spare parts to Iran. The exaggerated concern showed that Washington is tilting toward Iraq. In the past it has allowed American-made military equipment to be sold to Iran, either directly or through third parties. Last December, fearing that the tide was turning against Iraq, the Administration cracked down on shipments of spare parts to Iran. It also dispatched Deputy Assistant Secretary of State James Placke and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Maj. Gen. Edward Tixier to the Gulf states. The officials informed rulers there that Washington would regard an Iranian victory as "contrary to U.S. interests." As expected, that assurance boosted Iraqi morale. On January 23 the Administration added Iran to the list of "terrorist nations," which includes Syria, Libya, South Yemen and Cuba.

In a war as drawn out and inconclusive as this one has been, social, economic and political factors in the belligerent countries become increasingly decisive. From the outset, the Iranians have adjusted to the dislocations of war better than the Iraqis. When Iraq invaded it in September 1980, Iran was undergoing postrevolutionary turmoil; thus its people took this new crisis in stride. The Iraqis, however, were enjoying unprecedented prosperity due to the oil boom, and a massive social welfare program had been launched. The Iraqi government told its people that the war would be short and that its objective was to overthrow the "maniac" Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Once that was accomplished, their future economic security and political domination of the Gulf region would be assured.

When the hope of a quick victory faded, Hussein's government became confused about its war aims, and support at home and abroad eroded. Then in July 1982 the Iranian Army invaded Iraq for the first time, in an attempt to capture the port of Basra. The urgent need to repel the invaders at least solved the problem of war aims. During the ensuing months, Iraqi forces defended their country well. They combined ingenious defensive tactics, using barbed wire, mines and flooded trenches, with superior air power and helicopter gunships.

Having far fewer combat planes than Iraq, Iran has relied on human-wave attacks, in which groups of about 300 to 500 soldiers advance in intervals of 200 to 500 yards. The intention is to exhaust the defenders' ammunition, then overpower them. Of course the strategy has taken a huge toll. Prior to the recent offensive in the Al Qurna sector, Iranian casualties totaled at least 250,000 dead and 400,000 wounded, compared with 80,000 Iraqi dead and 150,000 wounded.

It is Iraq, however, that is showing signs of strain. Baghdad has borrowed at least $25 billion to finance its war effort, and it has soldiers from Egypt, Jordan, the Sudan and Yemen who have volunteered to serve at the front. With oil exports down to 700,000 barrels a day, one-fifth the prewar level, its economic situation is dire. In contrast, Iran has relied entirely on its own human and financial resources.

Should Iran decide to block the Strait of Hormuz, it could go about it in several ways. It could sink a few tankers to frighten others away; it could mine the waterway; or its shore batteries could create a "wall of fire." The mines could be easily cleared by minesweepers or helicopters, but U.S. warships would be needed to knock out the gun emplacements.

Direct U.S. involvement in the fighting would have grave repercussions. It could provoke widespread anti-American demonstrations in the Gulf nations as well as acts of sabotage against the oilfields. Nor can the possibility of Soviet intervention be ruled out. Article 6 of the 1921 treaty between Iran and the Soviet Union states, "If a third party should attempt to carry out a policy of usurpation by means of armed intervention in Iran, Russia will have the right to advance her troops into the Iranian interior." Moscow invoked the treaty in August 1941, sending its troops into Iran even though there were no German forces in the country.

At present the Soviet Union is siding with Iraq, but the chance to show itself as a true friend of Iran when the latter is menaced by U.S. "imperialism" will be tempting. "Iran is the big prey for the superpowers," an American expert on the Middle East told me recently. "Iraq is just a sideshow."

DILIP HIRO

Dilip Hiro is the author of Inside the Middle East *(McGraw-Hill).*

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Freedom Medalist

President Reagan has awarded the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, to the late Whittaker Chambers. The nemesis of Alger Hiss, Chambers was a pathological liar who uttered more untruths than a computer can count, a man who, if his ultimate testimony against Hiss contained a shred of accuracy, had committed innumerable perjuries.

Chambers's final tale—that Hiss had passed him secret State Department documents—contradicted everything he had been saying for years. In his first appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, on August 3, 1948, Chambers charged only that in the mid-1930s Hiss had belonged to a Communist Party cell in Washington, D.C. He testified emphatically that espionage was *not* its purpose. In fourteen previous interviews with the F.B.I., he had said the same thing. Under all kinds of pressure he stuck to that story. Grilled on *Meet the Press* on August 27, 1948, he repeated his charge that Hiss had been a Communist, but he ruled out espionage, saying, "That was a group not . . . for the purpose of espionage but for the purpose of infiltrating government policy."

Even after Hiss sued Chambers for libel in 1948, he did not change his story. On October 14, a Federal grand jury asked him if he could name anyone who "was positively guilty of espionage against the United States." After taking a night to think it over, Chambers testified, "I do not believe I know of such a name."

In depositions taken for Hiss's libel suit in Baltimore, he remained adamant. On November 4, 1948, Hiss's attorney demanded that he produce documentary evidence, if he had any, to support his story. The next day, Chambers testified he had no such material, adding that he had never received any documents from Hiss. But at the next hearing, on November 17, 1948, Chambers performed an incredible somersault, producing sixty-five pages of typewritten State Department documents and four handwritten notes allegedly given him by Alger Hiss.

Even after he had dropped his bombshell, even after he had testified before another grand jury that Hiss had always been a spy, even after Hiss had been indicted for perjury for denying the charge, Chambers's story continued to shift directions like an Alaskan williwaw. Documents since obtained by Hiss under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that while F.B.I. agents were prepping Chambers for Hiss's first trial, which ended in a hung jury, Chambers almost gave F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover cardiac arrest. Under questioning by F.B.I. agents, he balked at even naming Hiss as a member of the Washington Communist cell. Alarmed, Hoover wired the New York City bureau that there must be some mistake. He received a disconcerting reply: Chambers "had not put Alger Hiss in the group because he was not sure Alger Hiss was in the group." There was worse to come. Chambers again refused to testify that he had received documents from Hiss. On February 2, 1949, the New York City bureau drafted a long pretrial memorandum outlining the evidence needed to convict Hiss. Concerning the documents, it included this jarring note: "It is not clear at this time if Chambers can testify that he received these particular 69 documents from Hiss, but upon establishing the facts of this situation, decision can thereafter be reached as to *who is in a position to introduce these documents.*" [Emphasis added.] There was no one else, and the reluctant Chambers was prevailed upon.

This is the record of a man whom our President has honored with the Medal of Freedom. To the President, Chambers represents "the conscience of America," and his story "represents a generation's disenchantment with statism and its return to eternal truths and fundamental values."

Does Reagan recognize eternal truths and fundamental values?

FRED J. COOK

Fred J. Cook, whose autobiography will be published this fall, has written extensively for The Nation *on the Alger Hiss case.*

FOLLOW-UP: HAITIAN ELECTIONS

As expected, Haitian legislative elections held on February 12 were a farce [see Raymond Alcide Joseph, "The Regime Selects an Opposition," *The Nation*, January 14]. In more diplomatic language, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Clayton McManaway Jr. called them a "disappointment," prompting Minister of the Interior and Defense Roger Lafontant to accuse him of "meddling in the internal affairs of a sovereign state." Lafontant joyfully proclaimed that all fifty-nine elected legislators are "dedicated Jean-Claudistes."

Some of the Jean-Claudistes won victories that would have pleased a Cook County alderman. In the village of Petit-Goave, fifty miles west of Port-au-Prince, Gérard Nelson was declared the winner in the morning, but in the afternoon the victory was awarded to Jean Sassine, a friend of the President's father-in-law. A defeated candidate had generously shifted his votes to Sassine. The people of Petit-Goave were not entertained by this electoral shell game. Riots broke out, which were quickly suppressed by police. According to unconfirmed reports, three persons were killed by gunfire, scores wounded and many arrested.

Commenting on the elections, Ambassador McManaway said, "We continue to believe that ultimate success in the effort to bring democracy to Haiti will require the establishment of political parties, free press and respect throughout for all the fundamental elements of a truly democratic process." Government censors prohibited Haitian newspapers from reporting the Ambassador's remarks.

A State Department spokesman told *The Nation* it will take the elections into account in its next report to Congress on Haiti's human rights record.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

It's difficult to imagine life in Washington without Thomas P. O'Neill. As the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the most public face of the Democratic leadership, his presence is practically inescapable. Every time the President appears on the tube with a smarmy justification for some new outrage, the picture slowly fades to an "equal time" comment from Tip. There he is, looking (and sometimes sounding) like a dog being washed, and handing out bipartisan bromides as if they were party favors. If some deplorable accident ever befell the Speaker (which Heaven forfend), the chief mourner would have to be Ronald Reagan. And for once, his emotion would be genuine. Tip O'Neill has been Reagan's most valued collaborator.

It was one of O'Neill's colleagues and cronies who first made this point. "The Speaker is enjoying sharing with the President," said Representative Martin Frost, a Texas Democrat. "He's enjoying power, and he's exercising power." Frost was intending to flatter his boss, but his admiring remarks contained more truth than he perhaps realized.

When the disastrous engagement of American forces in Lebanon was beginning, O'Neill cited Arthur Vandenberg and his view, primitive even in the Truman era, that "politics stops at the water's edge." He was instrumental in getting Congress to invoke the War Powers Resolution last September, authorizing another eighteen months for the marines in Beirut—eighteen months which would have seen the President through an election year. O'Neill rebuked Representatives Samuel Stratton and Clarence Long for their misgivings, calling stertorously for "patriotism above partisanship." At a closed Democratic caucus on October 26, he took the same line, bellowing, "I am a patriot!" In a grovel to the idea of the imperial Presidency, he even went so far as to say, "I will not criticize the country." With an opposition as loyal as this, is it surprising that Reagan has been mauled so little and has got away with so much?

The President, in return, treats O'Neill like a shaggy pet past its prime. In June 1981 he accused O'Neill of "sheer demagoguery" for saying that Republican policies were hurting working people. On that occasion the best O'Neill could do was threaten to end the "Congressional honeymoon"—a honeymoon to which many of his constituents had never consented in the first place. In March of 1983, Reagan said that those who criticized his defense budget were gladdening the Kremlin's heart. O'Neill described this as "McCarthyite" before resuming his call for a "bipartisan" defense policy.

Even last month, when Reagan accused O'Neill of cowardice and disloyalty for advocating the very policy—withdrawal of the marines from Beirut—that he was preparing to implement, the Speaker stuck doggedly to his pathetic "bipartisan" allegiance. In an embarrassing flash of insight he accused the President of being "political." O'Neill seems to think that if you add the word "football" to the word "political" and if you use the phrase "the American people" as often as seems bearable, you have disgraced dissent and made conformity into a patriotic virtue.

Every day before the House goes into session, the Speaker grants a quarter of an hour to the press. It's a show well worth attending. Most of those present in his office are regulars, who laugh at all jokes and ask respectful questions like "Do you have a comment on the President's weekend comment?" as if they were representing posterity. On February 22 I turned up at this feast of reason and asked the Speaker if, after the catastrophe of Lebanon, he regretted his statement that politics stops at the water's edge. He pretended not to understand the question until his counsel, Kirk O'Donnell, reminded him that he had made it. Surging around in his chair, he announced, "I'd like to see a bipartisan policy if we could possibly have it" (this, just as the marines were finding out where the water's edge really was). He added, "I wasn't part of the policy of the President"—which seemed an inadequate account of his role in delivering the War Powers Resolution and swatting aside the better judgment of many of his colleagues. Then he said, which was better than I had hoped for, "It was only after the fact that I learned about Grenada."

There are two related problems here. One is the human factor: the inclination of O'Neill, who is a genuine nice guy, to trust Reagan, who is only a pretend nice guy. This inclination, which has earned the Speaker nothing but insults and betrayals, has made him look more like a lap dog than a watchdog. The second problem is one of political naïveté: his confusion between the President as head of state and Commander in Chief and the President as a ruthless and stupid reactionary. If the distinction is unclear to O'Neill, it is certainly not lost on Reagan, who takes every opportunity to invoke the prestige of the first to dignify the second. To grant Reagan a standing above politics is to grant him his first premise, the claim that his ideas are somehow more "American."

In 1898, William Jennings Bryan served as an officer in William McKinley's imperialist war against Spain. At least in those days the Democrats were prepared to share in the risk and the disgrace of an adventurous foreign policy. Now it seems the Democrats will support the wildest excursions unless or until they go wrong. There is neither principle nor advantage in such a policy. "The water's edge" was a silly conception of politics even in the nineteenth century. The "Congressional honeymoon" is a silly idea altogether. Speaker O'Neill pronounced the honeymoon over in June 1981. By this time he really should have broken things off for good.

* * *

Gary Hart was campaign manager for George McGovern in 1972. The campaign was unsuccessful, at least in part because it picked the wrong Vice-Presidential candidate. Hart argued strenuously that the Veep should be Kevin White, then the Mayor of Boston, the most conservative Democrat in Massachusetts. Keep your powder dry.

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CALVIN TRILLIN

Just when I was beginning to think that no one else was interested in the question of the President's mental capacities, *Time* ran a piece in its February 6 issue on the growing evidence that Ronald Reagan is what it delicately called "disengaged." Oddly enough, "disengaged" was precisely the word *Newsweek* used a few years ago to describe the President—around the time he greeted Samuel Pierce, his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, at a reception for mayors by saying, "How are you, Mr. Mayor? How are things in your city?" At the time, I confessed that I found the usage a bit cumbersome—it struck me as the equivalent of saying "She's really more than a disengaged blonde" or "It was nothing but disengaged luck"—but apparently it has caught on in the newsmagazine crowd.

Among the evidence *Time* presented to illustrate the President's disengagement was the fact that at a recent meeting with some governors he kept referring to E.P.A. administrator William Ruckelshaus as Don—an eerie echo of the Samuel Pierce episode. According to *Time*, Reagan still isn't quite straight on which of his chief aides is in charge of what, and doesn't seem to know where their offices are; he is said to let his staff run the Executive Branch, staying out of their disagreements because he "lacks the temperament, and often the knowledge, to choose between the competing arguments." In speeches, *Time* said, Reagan sometimes buttresses his arguments with historical examples that turn out to be from movies, and in a meeting with a foreign leader last year, he "pulled out and read from the wrong 4-in. by 6-in. cue cards." Disengaged move!

Time did not reveal the name of the foreign leader to whom Reagan read the wrong speech, but I like to think it was Margaret Thatcher. They are in the Oval Office, flanked by a few high-ranking diplomats. As Mrs. Thatcher finishes her remarks about how to deal with opposition to deployment of Pershing missiles in Western Europe ("a few strokes of the riding crop would sort out that lot"), Reagan takes some cards from his pocket. "My fellow Americans," he begins.

Mrs. Thatcher smiles politely, assuming that this is simply one more joke she doesn't get.

"I would like to tell you tonight the true story of one American who had a job to do and did it, and didn't join the crowd waiting around for a free ride from the government," the President continues.

"Quite right!" Mrs. Thatcher says. "A bunch of Bolshi layabouts!"

"It was in the American West, and this man came to a place where farmers and cattlemen were having some problems. His name was Shane . . ."

At about this point, as I envision it, the diplomats realize what has happened, and are, in *Time*'s phrase, aghast. They remain that way as Reagan continues with the story ("Come back, Shane . . .") or delivers a pitch about what the free enterprise system has enabled General Electric to produce for America. They are, as the saying goes, struck disengaged.

Being a magazine of some responsibility, *Time* made an effort to reassure those readers who might have become alarmed at the news that the President can't find his way around the White House. The story says that according to one White House aide, 80 percent of what Reagan doesn't know is unnecessary anyway. That kept me calm for a while, but then I began to wonder about the other 20 percent.

What I worry about is an emergency. I picture a slow afternoon in the White House—slow at least for the President. He is passing the time with a little exercise, working out cheerfully with a couple of ten-pound disengagedbells and trying to ignore the noise of Donald Regan and Martin Feldstein throwing chairs at each other in a nearby office. Suddenly, the hot-line telephone rings. It's Konstantin Chernenko. Reagan draws some cards from his pocket and tells Chernenko an inspiring story—the story of an American bar owner named Rick who didn't want to become involved in French politics in Casablanca but finally had to do what was right. But Chernenko has something else on his mind. He says American bombers seem to be approaching Soviet airspace, and if he doesn't get some reassurances from the White House right away, he is of a mind to let loose some missiles in the direction of Lawrence, Kansas.

However concerned I am about the 20 percent, I simply have to assume that the President knows for sure who Konstantin Chernenko is. It's been all over the papers. I'm just not up to entertaining the possibility that the President would respond to such a call by hanging up the phone, muttering "some nut," and going back to his disengagedbells. I have to think he would dash into James Baker's office and ask what to do.

As we now realize, though, he doesn't know where James Baker's office is. What if he dashes into the office of, say, the White House caterer? The caterer is in his starched whites, and here the old identification problem reasserts itself: the President believes he is speaking to the Chief of Naval Operations.

"How are you, Admiral? How are things in the fleet?" Reagan says. "Oh, we had a call from Chernenko that you fellows'll probably want to look into first thing in the morning. Something about sending missiles to Kansas."

At that point, Donald Regan staggers into the room, bleeding slightly from a head wound Feldstein managed to inflict with a Harvard Coop slide rule.

"How are you, George?" the President says, apparently mistaking Regan for the late Senator George Murphy, an old Hollywood pal. "How are things in Glocca Morra?"

By that time, the caterer, a look of panic on his face, has opened the doors of the disengagedwaiter and climbed inside. In the Oval Office down the hall, the telephone has started ringing.

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ARTICLES.

TWO TOWNS IN ISRAEL

West Bank 'Facts' Are Hitting Home

ROBERT ROSS

Israel faces two grave problems, and the clock is running out on both of them. The first is familiar to most Americans: the intention of the Begin and the Shamir governments to move as many as 100,000 Jewish settlers to the occupied West Bank—what officials call "creating facts" in Judea and Samaria. The other is economic and it is causing the country's descent into a political, religious and financial crisis. The second was provoked by the first. Settlement and military expenses have fueled a wild inflation (over 190 percent in 1983) which has necessitated draconian austerity measures. Most Israelis accept that as inevitable. The fact that there is no significant leftist opposition to austerity signifies the gravity of the economic crisis.

In a two-week "seminar on wheels" conducted by the American Jewish Committee for Jewish-American academics last December, I saw signs of the deepening trouble in two communities, the development town of Qiryat Shemona and the new settlement of Ariel. Qiryat Shemona is in the northern Galilee, near the Lebanese border. Planted there in 1949 to house the massive influx of Moroccan immigrants and to help create a Jewish majority in the Galilee, it is a testament to military and political town planning. Although it has a population of 15,000, Qiryat Shemona has as little economic justification for its existence as it did when it was founded. A majority of its residents are Sephardic Jews—that is, Jews from North Africa and the Middle East. Despite the government's liberal subsidies for housing and incentives for industry, Qiryat Shemona is not a stable or prosperous community. Most people there hold jobs in the low-wage service sector or in light industries. For every person who lives in Qiryat Shemona today, ten have moved away since it was founded. Set in a beautiful valley, the town nevertheless resembles a vast American public housing development, and its residents complain as much as people who live in such places in America.

The town of Ariel is located in occupied territory, in Samaria. About 360 families live there. Our guide told us that private construction firms have sold housing sites to 1,000 more families whose members will commute to nearby cities for work. The drive to Tel Aviv takes only forty-five minutes and buses run five times a day; Jerusalem is a one-hour ride away. A country club for Ariel's professional set, complete with Olympic-size swimming pool, is already being built. The dwellings are not uniform; a number of them are town houses and garden apartments similar to those in American suburbs.

Dina, who showed us around Ariel, emigrated recently from Montreal. One member of our group said her pitch for Ariel made it sound like the Great Neck of Samaria. The town is planned to be environmentally sound, Dina assured us. It will have schools specializing in electronics and high technology. By the year 2000 it will be a bedroom community of 175,000 professional and technical people. These affluent suburbanites will receive subsidized mortgages, and the town will get industrial aid similar to that which subsidizes Qiryat Shemona.

These subsidies are high compared with those granted by Western governments to similar developments in their countries. The Israeli government provides up to 75 percent of financing for new industries in both towns. By contrast, in Ireland, the United Kingdom and France, such large subsidies are available only to outlying or distressed areas like Qiryat Shemona, not to suburbs like Ariel.

To the visitor such a policy seems, to use a Yiddish expression, *farmisht*—confused, disoriented. When I suggested as much to Hebrew University's director of urban studies, Arieh Shachar, he disagreed. The policy is perfectly coherent, he said, given the Likud government's objective: to settle so many Jews on the West Bank that no Palestinian state can be set up.

Although a spokeswoman for the authorities on the West Bank told us that the government was pleased by the relative lack of violence and terrorism there after Israel invaded Lebanon two years ago, minor attacks occur quite frequently. Now, Jewish-instigated terror is a counterpoint to Palestinian acts of violence. While I was in Israel, the press carried reports that a Christian nun and a Moslem cleric had been seriously wounded by bombs planted at a West Bank mosque by Jewish extremists. The objective of these people is no secret. It is to terrorize significant numbers of West Bank Arabs (who number 750,000 or more) into emigrating. In America, Rabbi Meir Kahane and his followers call on Israeli Jews to encourage the emigration of West Bank Arabs.

In Jericho, which, like the West Bank, has been occupied since 1967, I saw a vast ghost town—a former refugee camp—surrounding the town center. The local police told me that before 1967 about 72,000 Arabs lived in Jericho; today the number is about 9,000. It is unlikely, even incredible, that the West Bank's indigenous residents will flee in comparable numbers. In fact, Israeli statistics indicate a vigorous growth of the Arab population in the West Bank and Gaza. But with the prospect of terror before them and a military administration over them, embittered Palestinian nationalists will probably continue, however brutally or counterproductively, to commit violent acts against the

Robert Ross is an associate professor of sociology specializing in urban affairs at Clark University. He is a policy analyst for a member of the Massachusetts Senate. *His travel expenses were paid in part by the American Jewish Committee.*

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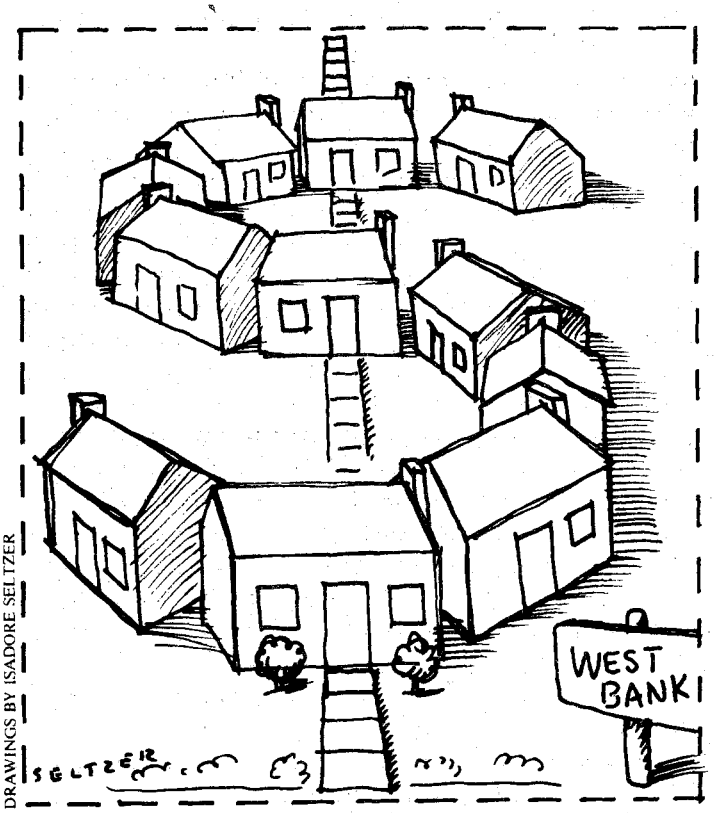
settlers. Just before we arrived in Israel a city bus was blown up in Jerusalem, killing five persons and wounding forty-three. Such incidents only aggravate the Israelis' sense that they are surrounded by enemies. Given the government's and the P.L.O.'s refusal to negotiate with each other and Israel's intransigence on the settlements, the country seems destined for a future of chronic insecurity and terror, playing the role of military overlord to a sullen, sometimes violent mass of people.

But crisis sometimes provides an opportunity. Israeli democracy could change course, and domestic needs could be the catalyst. To understand the possibility of such a change, the severity of Israel's economic situation must be appreciated. Inflation, which is expected to hit 250 percent this year, has taken a heavy toll despite wage indexing. In the past year the average Israeli's purchasing power eroded markedly. A joke making the rounds last winter went: Want to know how to make a small fortune in Israel? Come with a large one! Chronic government deficits are a major cause of inflation: 37 percent of the national budget goes to service the debt. Another 31 percent is spent on defense. Measured either as a percentage of the G.N.P. or per capita, Israel's military expenditures are higher than those of any other country except Qatar. Add to that expense the huge cost of settling the West Bank: between $120,000 and $150,000 for each person who moves to Judea or Samaria. For years those spiraling costs have been financed through the deficit. Now the reckoning is at hand.

Tuition charges for high-school students, lifted four years ago, may be reimposed; public libraries charge a lending fee; health, food and public transport subsidies have been cut. Most Israelis recognize the cause of these reductions in public services. Just before I left Jerusalem, an opinion poll reported that a majority of Israelis favored cutting expenditures on the settlements. In mid-January the Finance Minister forecast a 12 percent drop in living standards and a rise in unemployment.



DRAWINGS BY ISADORE SELTZER

Life in Qiryat Shemona is clouded by the economic crisis and the inability of Israel and the P.L.O. to reach a political settlement. The town suffered rocket attacks and guerrilla incursions throughout the late 1970s. Its residents remember vividly the physical and psychic insecurity that accompanied each day while the Syrians shelled them from the Golan Heights. After the Syrians were expelled, the P.L.O. fighters based in Lebanon rocketed the area. Consequently, the people of Qiryat Shemona are not doves. They support the government's defense and settlement policies. Yet our briefing officer, Marcia Brown, who was born in America and lives in the town by choice, showed an awareness of their heavy cost, saying that every suburbanite who moves to Ariel competes with Qiryat Shemona for scarce resources.

In Israel the politics of the settlements has two aspects. One is economic. Many migrants to the West Bank are lured by the prospect of an easy commute and housing that is cheap compared with what it costs in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The other is religious. Leading these pragmatic suburbanites are the religious extremists, typified by the Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful"), who claim a biblical right to the West Bank.

Those religious settlers, who represent a minority of Israel's largely secular population, believe Judea and Samaria *must* be settled by Jews, and the most fanatic among them want to drive out the Arabs [see Arthur H. Samuelson, "Gush Emunim: This Land Is Our Land," *The Nation*, December 8, 1979]. Most Israelis reject that idea. In fact, the tensions between the secular pragmatists and the religious nationalists is at least as divisive as the rift between European and Middle Eastern Jews. For example, the talk of impending austerity has caused secular Israelis to become more critical of state subsidies for religious schools.

The economic crisis may impel the majority to seek to reverse the longstanding policies that have prevented a peace settlement with the Palestinians. That will not be easy; three barriers must be overcome. First, however diverse and conflict-ridden the society is, the majority of Israel's Jews have a bunker mentality which encourages their leaders' diplomatic intransigence. Thus the general feeling that negotiations with the P.L.O. are impossible. When confronted with evidence of the P.L.O.'s willingness to recognize Israel's right to exist, most people react angrily. They belittle formal or informal statements to that effect by P.L.O. leaders and say that the assassination of Arab moderates is proof that peaceful overtures will be short-lived. Finally, they say the destruction of the P.L.O.'s base in Lebanon and Yasir Arafat's internal problems confirm their claim that "there is no one to negotiate with." So far, moral arguments have not shaken those deeply ingrained attitudes; however, the Peace Now movement has elicited significant support for its proposed freeze on settlement. Perhaps economic self-interest will create enough political pressure

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to force the government to take this step. More ambitious initiatives might follow.

Another obstacle to progress is the fragmented electoral system. There are thirty-two parties in Israel and twelve hold seats in the Knesset. All that is needed to win a place on the ballot in parliamentary elections is 750 signatures on a petition and a nominal fee. A party that wins 1 percent of the vote is awarded a seat in parliament. That system has enabled the tiny religious parties to obtain parliamentary representation. They are clever—some would say cynical—parliamentary tacticians, selling their support to whichever party will adopt their programs. Thus they have been able to wangle support for religious schools, for settlements and for other policies that are unpopular with both Likud and Labor Party members. Wishing to preserve its fragile governing coalition, the Likud will not cut the West Bank budget for fear it would lose a vote of confidence. The only way that deadlock will be broken is by major reforms in the electoral system or by a sweeping electoral victory for a party that advocates a conciliatory position toward the P.L.O. Neither is imminent.

The last barrier to change is the major parties themselves. Marcia Brown spoke of a new generation of leaders arising in the development towns. But she also criticized the Labor Party for being closed to fresh ideas and faces. Joseph Goell, a political columnist for *The Jerusalem Post*, has written that the Likud and Labor Parties are patronage machines without ideology. Despite the dominance of ideologues like Begin and Shamir, there is much truth to that characterization.

Overcoming Israel's bunker mentality will require a kind of realism that is not yet widely discernible. Violet Khouri, a Christian Arab, suggested one approach the Israelis might take toward the P.L.O. Whether or not the P.L.O. is a band of terrorists is irrelevant to the pursuit of a political settlement, she said. The British negotiated with Jewish terrorists who had blown up the King David Hotel; the French with Algerian terrorists, the Americans with Vietnamese terrorists. When one wants to make peace, she said, one bargains with the enemy. Khouri's voice is a lonely one in Israel, but in desperate times yesterday's radicalism sometimes becomes today's common sense.

One may ask what contribution the P.L.O. can make to assist the emergence of what Noam Chomsky calls an "accommodationist" political movement in Israel. Certainly it could tone down its rhetoric. Vows to obliterate the "Zionist entity" may vent feelings of injustice among dispossessed Palestinians but they make it more difficult to bring the Israelis to the bargaining table. Rhetoric aside, P.L.O. tactics seem based on an underestimation of Israeli endurance and an overestimation of the efficacy of terror. Repeated attacks on civilians are meant to exhaust one's adversary psychologically to the point that he is willing to reach a settlement. But its experience with Israel should teach the P.L.O. that the strategy is not working. Each bombing reinforces the bunker mentality.

Yet a corollary of this mentality is a sense of aloneness. Israelis feel they are captives of their past, their suffering and their isolation. But at Kibbutz Holit, in the Negev near Egypt, we met young adults who had lived in the Sinai until they were forced to relocate in accordance with the Camp David agreement. We asked a man how he felt about having to move. His face tightened. He said he would rather not talk about the matter at length but quickly added that he and his fellow kibbutz members had been willing to move in order to make peace more likely.

Another member of the kibbutz went by just then, pushing a wheeled playpen in which sat three infants. In the background stood a bomb shelter, gaily painted in pastels and surrounded by a playground, symbolizing the grimness of Israel's fight for survival and the hope for its future. □

THE G.M. SETTLEMENT

Back to Caveat Emptor at F.T.C.

TRACY FREEDMAN

In 1970 the Federal Trade Commission, headed by Caspar Weinberger, concluded a massive study of the automobile companies with a proposal that the industry be regulated as a public utility. In those days the F.T.C.'s view of its role paralleled that of consumer advocate Senator Frank Moss, who said it should be a "countervailing public force to the enormous economic and political power of [the] huge corporate conglomerates which today dominate American enterprise."

Fifteen years later, Caspar Weinberger dispenses defense largesse to the military-industrial complex, and the Reagan appointees on the F.T.C. work to undo the pro-consumer policies of the 1970s. A major step in that direction was taken recently, when the commission settled a suit it had brought in 1980 against General Motors, alleging that the company had produced more than 21 million cars with defects in transmissions, camshafts and diesel fuel injectors. Under the settlement, the auto company will not have to reimburse owners for the costs of repairing those cars. Instead, to receive payments each consumer must go before an arbitrator to prove that the car was defective when he or she bought it.

Critics of the settlement say it sets a precedent which will encourage other companies to challenge the commission's legal authority. They also charge that it represents the agency's return to the sidelines of consumer protection, where it has sat for most of its seventy years.

"G.M. is stealing from the public, and the F.T.C. is helping them get away with it," said Merle Campbell, leader of Dieselgate, a Portland, Oregon, group of owners of defective diesel cars who sued the company and won a settlement which reimbursed them for repairs. G.M. attorneys counter

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that the F.T.C. had insufficient evidence to win in court and that it had exceeded its authority by attempting to regulate the manufacture and design of automobiles.

The government's case originated in 1978, when the F.T.C. began receiving complaints from thousands of car buyers. They detailed transmission failures after as few as 20,000 miles (the warranty covers the first 12,000 miles), camshaft and lifter failures in Chevrolet V-8 engines and malfunctioning fuel pumps and injectors in Oldsmobile diesel engines. Today, the commission has about 40,000 such complaints against G.M. on file—many of them frivolous, the company's attorneys claim, generated by distorted publicity.

The commission's suit charged the auto company with violating Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, which requires it to disclose to the buying public information it has concerning "serious problems or defects in its cars." The act prohibits "unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce." It has been used, on somewhat tenuous grounds, to require warning labels on cigarette packs and to compel auto companies, including Ford, Honda and Chrysler to reimburse owners for repairs of faulty vehicles. In 1980 Ford agreed to pay repair costs for engine-block cracks and other defects in 6 million cars; in some cases the settlements amounted to as much as $3,000.

But G.M. dug in its heels and threatened to fight the F.T.C. all the way to the Supreme Court. Five commission staff attorneys spent five years in investigation and pretrial discovery proceedings trying to obtain corporate documents and data on failure rates. Under the F.T.C. Act the commission must prove that a company failed to disclose defects it knew or should have known existed in its product before it can go to court to obtain an order that the company reimburse consumers for repairs. The litigation against G.M. could have dragged on well into the 1990s, F.T.C. lawyers estimated, so the commission voted to settle.

In a statement accompanying the F.T.C.'s agreement with G.M., commissioner Patricia Bailey wrote that dropping the suit was "the fastest and indeed the only feasible way to redress the injury suffered by many G.M. owners." Commissioner George W. Douglas concurred, noting that "pursuit of litigation in this matter would provide a compelling textbook example of the aphorism, 'Justice delayed is justice denied.'" The sole vote against the settlement agreement was cast by Michael Pertschuk, who was chairman of the F.T.C. when the case was initiated. Recently Douglas accused him of embarking on a "quixotic quest" to protect consumers.

"The F.T.C. is only effective when it's scary, when it's perceived as the Tyrannosaurus rex of regulatory agencies," Pertschuk told me. "Ford paid consumers for fear of how a refusal would look to the public."

Why did the commission abandon the case? Did it lack proof that the company concealed defects in its cars? Will the F.T.C.'s retreat encourage other companies to engage in deceptive business practices?

Since the records in the case have been sealed under the terms of the settlement, those questions cannot be answered with finality. But principals involved in the case and F.T.C. memorandums relating to it obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Representative Al Swift suggest that G.M. employed a highly effective legal strategy which took advantage of the F.T.C.'s shaky statutory mandate. The auto company openly questioned the commission's authority to prosecute such a case and indicated it would employ every legal procedure available to block the F.T.C.'s progress on the case.

The government's strongest evidence was the "abnormally high failure rate" (it declined to use the term "defects") in scores of G.M. cars. In a January 1983 memorandum to the commission, released under the F.O.I.A., attorneys from its Cleveland office wrote that they suspected that G.M. had "identified and corrected as many as 27 design problems with the THM 200" transmission between 1976 and 1980. Citing documents provided by G.M., the attorneys charged that the lightweight THM 200s, which were supposed to increase gas mileage, generally broke down at about twice the rate of G.M.'s heavier THM 350 transmissions, and repair costs ranged from $400 to $600. One document showed that 28 percent of the THM 200s failed after twenty-seven months on the road, compared with 13 percent of the larger models. The lawyers warned, however, "We cannot attribute THM 200 transmission failures to a single identifiable defective part. Nor, we suspect, can GM." (Other estimates of THM 200 failures range as high as 50 percent after no longer than two years on the road.)

Camshafts and lifters also failed, rendering an affected engine "almost unusable." Repairs cost more than $400. "Even relatively small failure rates may be significant for [camshafts]," according to the memo, because those parts are expected "to last for the life of the car." Furthermore, G.M. "half-disclosed" and "half-cured" fuel pump and injector defects—which were only some of the diesels' maladies. Repairs on contaminated diesel fuel injection systems cost from $300 to $500.

According to F.O.I.A. documents, the commission also amassed evidence that showed that G.M. had knowingly sold cars containing one or more faulty components and that it had withheld information on maintenance and repairs that could have saved consumers millions of dollars. In 1976, for example, G.M.'s Chevrolet division notified its regional offices that certain lubricating oils might not provide adequate protection for camshafts. But the company did not inform G.M. dealers of this problem until 1978 and did not revise its owner's manuals until 1980—after the oils had been reformulated. The F.T.C. found evidence that certain transmission problems could have been prevented if consumers had been advised to use a special additive.

Despite this and additional evidence (including a widely cited investigation by *Automotive News* which found that seven of nine G.M. diesel transmissions failed in tests conducted by the State of California), the F.T.C. and G.M. began settlement talks soon after Reagan was inaugurated. "There was argument on the facts within the F.T.C.," explained John Mendenhall, an F.T.C. attorney. "If the

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facts had clearly shown that the [disclosure] law was violated, the Administration would have . . . held out for redress."

Mendenhall is nevertheless "very proud" of the settlement, particularly the requirement that for the next eight years G.M. must release to the public repair information heretofore available only to dealers. This data, contained in G.M.'s Product Service Publications, "can put the consumer on guard regarding the maintenance of a questioned component . . . and help them avoid lots of repair expenses," Mendenhall said. "My hope is that G.M. will build a better car for people, and if not, at least they'll let people know the kind of quality they can expect from G.M. cars."

But that provision is bad for the car buyer because it exempts G.M. from F.T.C. jurisdiction, which covers only deceptive practices. The commission cannot accuse the company of concealing failures during the life of the settlement. Further, G.M. will release such bulletins only beginning with the 1982 model year—small consolation to owners of defective cars purchased before that time.

The commissioners, save Pertschuk, are also convinced that the arbitration provision of the settlement is fair to consumers. The commission plausibly argues that arbitration is an economical alternative to litigation, and Douglas estimates that car owners will collect nearly $95 million from settlements arrived at through arbitration, "approximately six times" what the F.T.C. could have obtained under a court order for repair reimbursements. But the Consumers Union, the National Association of Attorneys General and other groups complain that arbitration is an inappropriate remedy for multiple cases involving generic defects. They make three main criticisms:

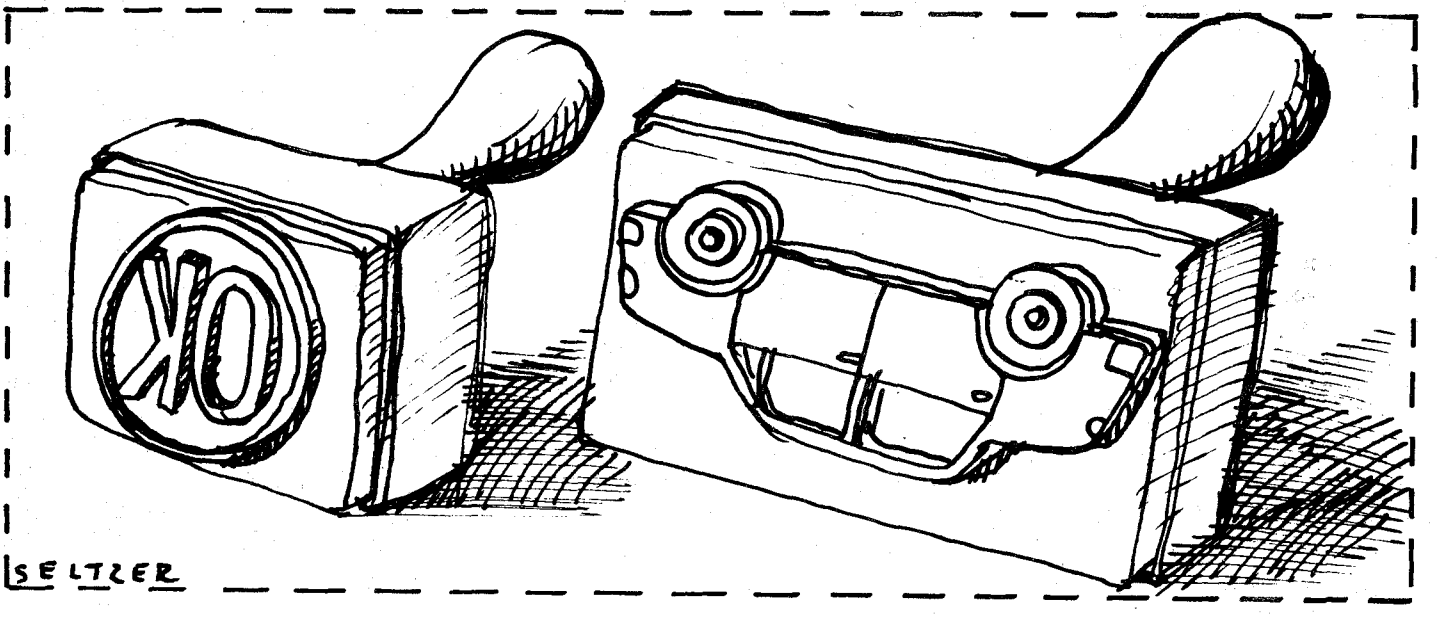
§ Arbitration has a roulette-wheel quality. As F.T.C. attorney Eddie Correia said, "If half the consumers get money back, that's fine—but what if 95 percent of them deserved money back?"

§ "Fact sheets" offered to help consumers in arbitration were prepared by G.M. attorneys. The sheets leave the impression there was no abnormal failure of G.M. components and emphasize consumer carelessness and poor maintenance as the likeliest culprits.

§ Arbitration presents G.M. with a publicity bonanza. Rather than admit that all the cars of a particular type are defective, the company puts money in the pockets of only a few consumers.

Another catch: although there could be as many as 21 million defective cars, only about half a million people are expected to reach the arbitration stage. First, they must go through a mediation phase, which involves haggling with G.M. dealers, division managers and regional representatives, a lengthy process. Past experience with this phase shows that nine in ten complainants give up before clearing that hurdle. Those who decide to go the arbitration route after having tried earlier and given up must go through the entire procedure again. Critics also contend that most consumers receive little money in arbitration procedures (G.M. refuses to release figures) because they are so worn down by delays that they don't press their claims for the full amount. A consumer who is dissatisfied with the arbitrator's decision can still sue, but few are plucky enough to face G.M.'s legal brigade.

G.M. dismisses the criticisms of what it calls "self-styled consumer advocates." According to attorneys Francis Dunne and David Collins, who represented the auto company in the F.T.C.'s case, it was more eager to go to trial than the commission and settled mainly to minimize adverse publicity. "Customers may be led to believe something about your product that's not true," explained Dunne in a recent telephone interview while other G.M. representatives listened in. But, he continued, "When you're on the attack and you've got the Federal government label, the press is more likely to give the government more credence than they would someone else. There was a large publicity component [to the settlement]." Dunne and Collins added that the expansion of G.M.'s present arbitration program (begun only last year) would probably not "incrementally" raise reimbursement costs much, so it seemed cheaper not to go to court.



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G.M. has charged in legal documents and in a press release accompanying the agreement that the F.T.C. complaint was "intentionally drafted . . . to avoid the necessity of proving that GM transmissions have been subject to 'serious problems or defects.'" Instead, it claimed, the F.T.C. merely reported "an actuarial phenomenon" in describing an "abnormally high failure rate" for G.M. components. How, G.M. asked, could it be expected to divine at what point evolving design changes became "defects" requiring consumer notification? And how can the company be held to any standard of reliability, durability or performance for its products as long as there is no "accepted definition" of these terms within the auto industry?

Consumer activists suggest, however, that it was not a lack of evidence that caused the F.T.C. to settle but a lack of will to pursue the case. Using the same evidence that the commission had, a half-dozen groups of diesel owners have won substantial sums from G.M. for repairs of transmissions and other defective parts. Dieselgate filed 1,600 claims averaging $1,600 per car. The company settled out of court, buying back several of the cars at a cost of more than $10,000 apiece.

"G.M. violated the public trust," said Merle Campbell. "They have a total lack of corporate integrity. A company must be made responsible for its products and its failures."

The Center for Auto Safety blames the F.T.C.'s willingness to settle on the chairman, James C. Miller 3d, who had received $75,000 in consulting fees from G.M. before joining the commission in the fall of 1981. Miller removed himself from the case for two years following his last payment from G.M. but cast the deciding vote for the agreement last spring. In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Miller was quoted as saying that he had "bent over backwards" to avoid a conflict of interest.

G.M. attorney Collins told me: "We do believe the commission was in over its head. It is not properly equipped to decide or regulate the thousands of components in automobiles, and decide what an acceptable or a normal failure frequency for those components is. . . . I think they were trying to shoehorn a mountain of very complicated facts to fit their central charter—and they couldn't do it."

But Pertschuk responds, "The general impression conveyed by the Reagan people—that they're simply not going to be tough on these cases—stiffened G.M.'s negotiating spine, and they held out longer than they would have three years earlier." Congress, which threatens a legislative veto each time the F.T.C. even sneezes at a special interest, is responsible as well.

Pertschuk has proposed a new set of F.T.C. rules that would "recognize the economic importance of auto purchases to all consumers." The rules would establish uniform standards specifying the kinds of defects car manufacturers would have to disclose and detailing what repairs they would be responsible for under warranty. They would also empower the commission to bypass the lengthy administrative review process and go directly to court for a permanent injunction against a company. Barring a change of Administration, however, his proposal is unlikely to be adopted. An Administration dedicated to deregulation has little stomach for recovering thousands of auto-repair bills of at least $400 each on behalf of consumers. "The G.M. case has no dramatic injuries; it's the story of the little guy going back and forth to the repair shop," notes an attorney who has brought similar cases against G.M. (The Justice Department recently filed suit against G.M. for its alleged cover-up of brake defects in 1.1 million X-cars implicated in seventy-one injuries and fifteen deaths—which were apparently dramatic enough.)

But prosaic design defects cost consumers millions in repairs. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that one-third of the more than 40 million cars built in the United States between 1976 and 1980 were recalled for defects, nearly twice the rate for Japanese models. Meanwhile the auto giants report record profits. Compared with 1980, when G.M. lost $762.5 million, the company netted $3.7 billion in 1983. Yet that year G.M. sold only 4.8 percent more cars and trucks than it had in 1980.

In tacitly accepting G.M.'s decision to cut quality and maximize profits regardless of the hidden cost to its customers, the F.T.C. reveals the government's lack of will to protect consumer pocketbooks and shows the lie behind the Administration's purported concern for the little guy. □

Mitterrand

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

There is one fallacy in all such critiques: none of those places has tried socialism. What has not worked is the brand of "socialism" that does not venture beyond the limits of capitalism. Those who play a dirge for socialism are actually sounding a requiem for social democracy.

Demonstrating that point requires only a cursory review of the "failures" usually cited. In Italy the government of Prime Minister Bettino Craxi does not qualify as socialist, since the ruling coalition is dominated by the Christian Democratic Party. Portugal's Mário Soares was voted into power not to repeal the capitalist rules of the game but to restore them. As for Spain, Felipe González's political course makes even Helmut Schmidt of West Germany look radical in retrospect.

To be sure, Portugal, Spain and Greece emerged only recently from years of dictatorial rule. The task of left-wing governments in those countries has been to restore and consolidate the basic freedoms of bourgeois democracy. Whether that can be done without fundamental economic reform is another question.

To ascertain whether the socialist experiment has failed or indeed has even been attempted, one must turn to Paris. After all, France is still governed by a popular front coalition that includes the Communist Party, and not so long ago Socialists considered the label "social democrat" an insult.

Daniel Singer is The Nation*'s European correspondent and the author of* The Road to Gdansk *(Monthly Review Press).*

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In fairness to Mitterrand, it should be said that he never asked for a mandate to build socialism in France nor did he promise to lead his supporters along the revolutionary road. In a way, the popular front alliance was formed as an alternative to revolution. In May 1968, France was shaken not by a simple student uprising but by the biggest sit-in strike in its history, an upheaval which took the traditional left-wing parties completely by surprise. Both the Communists and the Socialists had to decide how to direct a spontaneous mass movement into parliamentary channels, how to convince their supporters that while there were no revolutionary shortcuts, change could be effected gradually through existing institutions. The Common Program drawn up in 1972 by the Communists and the Socialists was a rough map of this reformist road.

But their program had a side effect. A moderate platform favors the moderate in a coalition, and in France it helped shift the balance of power to the Socialists. The Communists' refusal to accept the role of junior partner led to the breakup of the alliance and the left's defeat in the parliamentary elections of 1978. All that had a series of consequences. The divided left never properly debated the issues raised by the economic crisis or the methods for coping with it. Mitterrand could claim that in the presidential poll of 1981 he won on his own. The Communists, who then climbed on the bandwagon, did not carry the influence they would have if they had not broken with the Socialists earlier. Altogether, victory was thrust upon the left by popular discontent with the right and paradoxically—unlike the triumph of Léon Blum's Popular Front in 1936—it coincided with the ebb of the workers' protest movement.

Nonetheless, the victory of the French left after twenty-three years of conservative rule was more significant than a success of the Labor Party in Britain or of the Social Democrats in Germany. The French left had promised to make a clean break with the past, and in its first 500 days, Mitterrand's government introduced a host of important reforms which can be grouped into three categories. First, it extended the public sector to steel, electronics, arms manufacturing, petrochemicals and, most important, to the bulk of banking and insurance. Second, it enacted a series of social measures aimed at propping up the welfare state at a time when the general trend was to dismantle it—a fifth week of paid vacation for workers, a reduction of the work-week to thirty-nine hours, an increase in the minimum wage and family allowances. Finally, it increased workers' rights in the factory through the so-called Auroux laws and other legislation.

All those reforms, however, were not intended to cross the capitalist system's outer frontiers or even to question its basic assumptions. Nationalization affected industries in deep crisis, like steel, or advanced sectors like electronics in which investment was insufficient. The state was stepping in where capitalism had failed, with the idea of doing the job better, not doing it differently. There was never a question of producing for different social objectives or reorganizing the system of production. Similarly, measures taken to reduce the economic inequality so evident in France were never presented as a means toward an egalitarian society. Nor were the new shop-floor prerogatives for workers considered a prelude to the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. On the contrary, Mitterrand was soon to sing the praises of private enterprise.

While not radical enough to threaten the established order, the reforms were sufficiently sweeping to provoke hostility. The most surprising thing was the extent to which the Socialist newcomers behaved as if France and Europe were still living in the period of relative prosperity that followed World War II. From that perspective it should have been easy to get out of recession using Keynesian measures. The "gnomes of Zurich" and other financial centers, who mistrust a Socialist government on principle, did not have to plot its downfall. France was unprotected by tariff walls; it was an integral part of the Common Market and much more dependent on foreign trade than in the past, so accelerated inflation and a growing trade deficit did the trick. In March 1983, after the franc was devalued for the third time, the government was forced to balance its books in good capitalist fashion and to subordinate everything else to that objective.

Some Socialists still cherish the idea that they can combine capitalist logic and progressive social policy, but such illusions are rapidly vanishing. Minister of Finance Jacques Delors tells his colleagues that the social welfare budget must be cut. As the number of available jobs declines it becomes increasingly costly and difficult to conceal the rise in unemployment with retraining schemes or early retirements. And the restructuring of industry, which calls for massive layoffs, has only begun. The change in social climate was symbolically illustrated last year when the Socialist government received applause from the Bourse and protests from organized labor. Share prices in Paris rose faster than those on other Western stock exchanges. Discontent among workers was shown graphically in the September elections of delegates to social welfare councils. Two large labor unions that support the government, the Communist-dominated General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.) and the Catholic French Democratic Labor Confederation (C.F.D.T.), were big losers. Since then their leaders have perceptibly distanced themselves from Mitterrand, discreetly asking the question that their rank-and-file members are asking: Why should we accept from "our" government what we refused to take from its predecessors, especially without any compensation?

A left-wing government that overrides the interests of its constituency is bound to generate criticism from within. French Socialist leaders are under attack from two quarters. The first is the so-called *deuxième gauche* ("second left"). Minister of Agriculture Michel Rocard, who would have been its leading spokesman had he not dared to challenge Mitterrand for the leadership in the past, is working his passage back to the President's favor, quietly performing his ministerial duties and faithfully toeing the line. His role has fallen to Edmond Maire, the outspoken leader of the C.F.D.T. Since the Socialists took power, Maire has indulged

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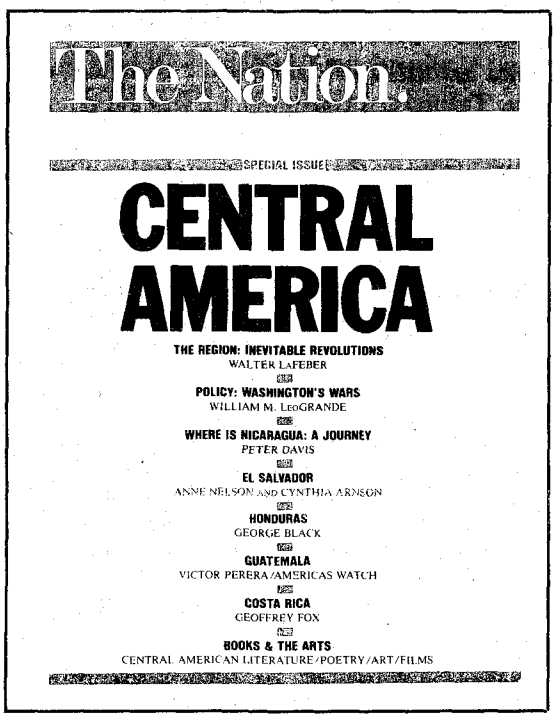

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in friendly criticism, arguing that the government is not employing means appropriate to its ends. Emphasizing the issue of unemployment, he has pleaded for a sharp cut in working hours, with a slight reduction in wages if necessary.

The trouble with the *deuxième gauche* is that it often uses the language of the New Left while promoting social democratic programs. The two are contradictory. The C.F.D.T. champions *autogestion*, but for workers, self-management limited to individual factories and unrelated to a broader vision of social change becomes an exercise in self-exploitation. No wonder that in the last two years the C.F.D.T. has followed a zigzag line, with outbursts of intransigence between long periods of moderation.

The other group of critics, the "productivists," fault the government for abandoning its original blueprint for economic expansion; for them the only solution lies in a faster rate of growth. Chief among this group are many Socialists, particularly the CERES group, headed by Jean-Pierre Chevènement, as well as the Communists. Their arguments are not always convincing. For instance, the Communist Party maintains that there is no surplus labor in, say, the French automobile or steel industries. But in the context of capitalist France, obviously there is.

The heart of the matter is that in a highly personalized presidential system members of the ruling coalition do not dare question openly the fundamental tenets of Mitterrand's policy—his capitalist solutions at home and his laissez-faire approach to foreign trade. By discrediting the consequences of those policies and not their roots, the critics appear neither coherent nor consistent. The C.P. has reached such an acute stage of schizophrenia—its ministers endorsing programs that party and union leaders flatly reject—that its exit from the government can no longer be ruled out.

Any genuine socialist movement faces a dilemma: how to seek solutions that lie outside the framework of established society while struggling within that framework. If it keeps its gaze fixed on the future, it may find itself years ahead of its supporters. If it sticks to defending their immediate interests, it will be forced to play the role of manager in a capitalist society. When it was out of power, the French left gave no indication that it would be the exception to the rule. Once Mitterrand got into office, however, the classic dilemma evaporated. He and his comrades had no intention of trespassing. Their problems are those of social democrats who in times of economic crisis find they cannot afford to keep their promises and so antagonize their supporters. The question of whether the Socialists are performing the task of capitalist "restructuring" better than their predecessors is irrelevant. Former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and his Prime Minister, Raymond Barre, during whose reign investment declined while unemployment climbed catastrophically, look ridiculous in their new role as judges of economic efficiency. But here we are not concerned with the relative merits of politicians on the right and the left whose policies are fundamentally similar. Mitterrand's successes or failures cannot honestly be entered on either the credit or the debit side of socialism.

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At the halfway point, the French socialist experiment looks rather like a failure in political terms. The next parliamentary elections will be held in two years and the next presidential vote in four. Under the most favorable circumstances, the President may succeed in splitting the right in the parliamentary elections, wooing its moderate elements and carrying on as the head of a "centrist" alliance stretching from Socialists to liberal conservatives. The Communists would no longer serve in the Cabinet though they might remain in the coalition. But that is an unlikely scenario. The odds favor a defeat of the left, which in keeping with a long tradition will pave the way for a government of the right that will launch a savage attack on the interests of working people. The groundwork for the assault will have been laid by the left's "own" government.

Could it have been otherwise? By now the left has squandered most of its political capital. Yet that capital was impressive back in 1981. Then the Socialists were in a position to ask people to make sacrifices. The workers would probably have agreed to tighten their belts if told for how long and for what end. If Mitterrand had communicated a vision and a project for socialism, he might have split the middle class, winning the support of, say, teachers, technicians and researchers. All that, however, could not be built on a false consensus concealing contradictions. It would have required the frank admission that differences existed and a search for a true alliance, capable of the long-term action necessary to achieve a radical transformation of society. It also would have required a different kind of government: one which does not issue gifts from above—Elysian fiats, decrees decided in ministerial secrecy—but encourages open discussions and debates at all levels, in factories and offices, in local as well as ministerial councils.

Some might object that even if France had a genuine socialist government and even if people had responded to its call for sacrifice, two big ifs, the experiment still would have failed under pressure from abroad. The point is well taken insofar as it reminds us that the idea of socialism in a single country, which proved wrong in Stalin's day, is absurd in this age of economic interdependence, particularly in a country the size of France. But the objection is also irrelevant. The question is not whether socialism can be built in one country but whether the process can even begin within the frontiers of a medium-size nation-state. It is a crucial question, though just to attempt an answer we must first look at the other and still sadder side of Mitterrand's reign, his record in foreign policy.

Reagan's Strange Ally

France looks like a fantasy island cut off from the vast antinuclear movement in Western Europe. Something is wrong with a country in which otherwise sensible people admiringly repeat their President's dictum, "The Euromissiles are in the East and the demonstrators are in the West." Had he said that there were missiles on both sides but mass demonstrations are tolerated only on one, he might have started a useful debate. Postulating an artificial divide between intermediate and strategic weapons and purposely ig-

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noring the destabilizing effect of the Pershing missiles, Mitterrand scored a propaganda point. The fact that such biased arguments are accepted by so many French people as gospel suggests a certain amount of brainwashing.

I don't think that word is too strong. *The Day After* was shown in Poland, but French television, which is owned by the government, decided it was unsuitable for viewers. Admittedly, the French could see it in movie theaters, yet on a public radio program inspired by the film, schoolchildren who asked questions about the possibility of nuclear doom were answered by just one expert, Pierre Gallois, a retired general connected with the arms industry, who is as close to the official French position as a Soviet spokesman would be to the Chernenko line.

On January 4, when French television devoted eighty minutes to the nuclear issue, critics of official policy—Communist Party spokesman Pierre Juquin and Adm. Antoine Sanguinetti, retired—were allowed only brief statements and the time was monopolized by the government's defenders, notably André Glucksmann, the *nouveau philosophe* turned panegyrist of the atom bomb. (Incidentally, if you want to see how far sophistry can go in combining phony erudition and special pleading, if you want to discover how even Proust was begging for Pershing missiles, glance at Glucksmann's latest book, *La Force du Vertige*.) The following day, *Le Monde* justified the glaring imbalance by saying Glucksmann's views "sum up the consensus of French political forces, with the exception of the C.P." A strange sermon indeed from the preachers of pluralism. I have heard the same argument used in Moscow to justify silencing dissidents.

But brainwashing alone did not make France the odd man out in Western Europe. To explain the weakness of the French antinuclear movement one must begin elsewhere. Because France remains outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, its leaders can advocate the deployment of American missiles without causing political problems. None of those missiles will be placed on French soil. Less logically, some of the French seem to think that, if a nuclear confrontation ever arises, the bombs or missiles will respect national boundaries. One must also understand that both th Communists and the Socialists, who in the distant past op posed nuclear weapons and poked fun at Gen. Charles d Gaulle's *force de frappe*, have long since been converted t the doctrine of the national deterrent and are thus hardly i a comfortable position to make the case against atomi weapons.

Another factor is that non-Communist antinuclear or ganizations like the Committee for European Nuclear Dis armament have not attracted much attention, and so th general public associates the peace movement with the Com munist Party. That link has at least three negative effects First, having backed the Kremlin on Poland and Afghani stan, the French C.P. is not regarded as the most unbiasec guide to international politics. Second, Communist leader within the peace movement who have been told by thei party that they must attack the SS-20s as well as the Pershing and cruise missiles have ended up doing neither very well Third, the party belongs to a government that is solidly committed to the deployment of American missiles. The main responsibility for the irresponsibility of the French left thus lies squarely on the shoulders of the Socialists and their leader.

Again, to be fair, Mitterrand did not fool the electorate. He was known to be a "Little European" with Atlantic leanings. What people did not bargain for was the zeal with which he pleaded the American case. He was so determined to convince his European neighbors to accept what France has rejected, namely the presence of American missiles on their soil, that he journeyed to Bonn in the midst of the 1983 electoral campaign and sided with the Christian Democrats against his fellow Social Democrats on missile deployment. What came as a surprise was not so much Mitterrand's readiness to act as Reagan's chief advocate in Europe but his willingness to be seen performing that role, and that has led to varying interpretations.

The official line is that Mitterrand has taken Reagan's side only because the nuclear balance has tilted dangerously in the Soviet Union's favor with the deployment of the SS-20s. But a truly objective observer would not have regarded the Euromissiles with such equanimity. He or she would have pointed out that their deployment gives the Americans an edge over the Russians. What would the French have said if the situation were reversed and the Soviet Union had put missiles in Cuba, thus enabling it to hit American targets much faster than U.S. missiles could reach Soviet territory?

Two other explanations for France's nuclear strategy have been offered. According to one, the French support the introduction of the U.S. missiles in order to insure an American presence in Europe and, above all, to perpetuate the division of Germany. The dominant characteristic of French foreign policy is fear of German reunification. (As François Mauriac put it, "I love Germany so much that I want to see two of them.") A flaw in this theory is that when General de Gaulle was concerned about German power and German opposition to his policies, he turned to the Kremlin rather than to the White House. The other

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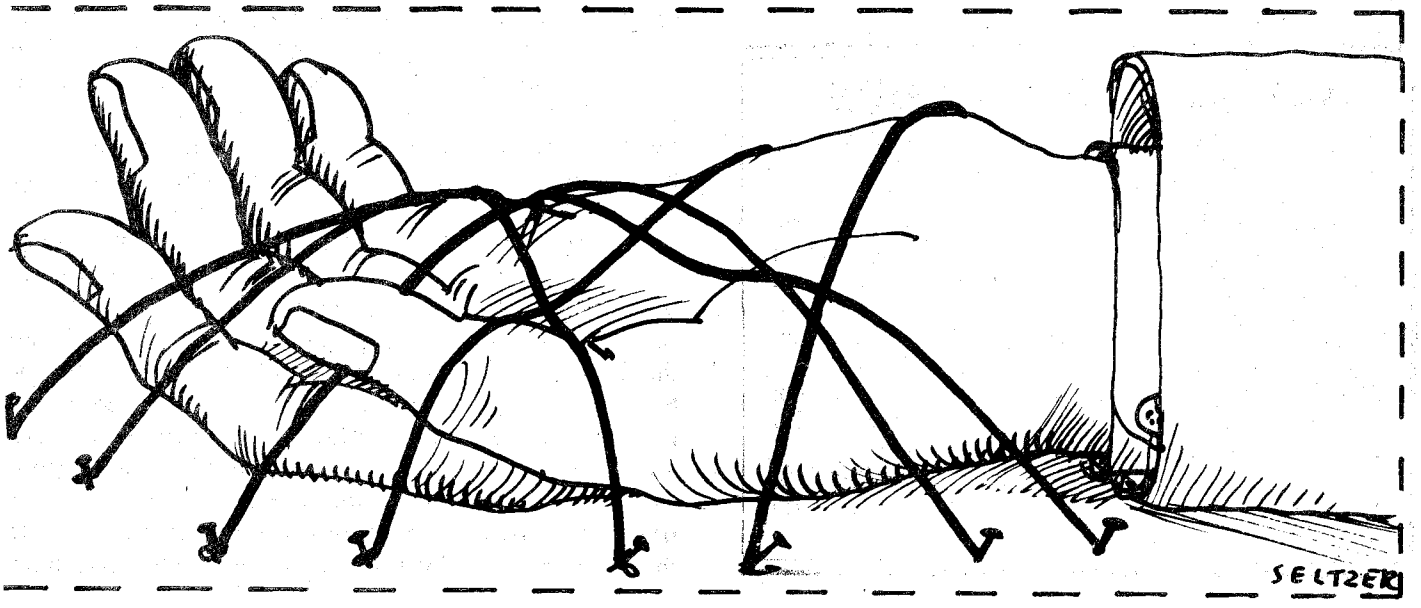
gument is more pedestrian. It holds that Mitterrand feels ıpelled to prove that having Communists in his governent does not tie his hands in foreign policy. As a result he ust stand up to Moscow; he must out-Reagan Reagan.

All those analyses point to something more fundamental, Mitterrand's inability to contemplate a future beyond the ıpitalist horizon. The Socialists have proved they are inıpable of solving France's economic problems outside the ınfines of capitalist society; similarly, they are unable to ink of their country's future in terms of neutralism, of ınalignment, of a socialist "third force" beginning in 'estern Europe. Mitterrand's failure is seen clearly when s policies are contrasted with the achievements of what we ı the left used to call the "anachronistic realism" of eneral de Gaulle.

De Gaulle wanted to speak to the two superpowers as an ıual. Since a country the size of France, to his "chagrin," id not allow him to do so, he was ready to call on "the ıuntries bordering on the Rhine, the Alps and the yrenees." As leader of that bloc he would challenge the vo "hegemonies." The general was being realistic in that e believed the nation-state, even if historically doomed, ill offered tremendous possibilities to a determined practioner of power politics. So he pulled France out of NATO, hallenged the mighty dollar, opposed American policy in ietnam, slowed down Europe's political and economic in-gration. But he fought a losing battle. He did not have the lanned means to resist the invasion of Europe by foreign, redominantly American, capital. He did not offer a vision f an alternative society and, therefore, there was no reason or other Western European countries to follow his lead. mplicit or explicit in the left's criticism of him at the time /as the assumption that a socialist government would create different society and offer a different foreign policy. Mit-errand has belied that assumption, to put it mildly.

On assuming office in 1981 the Socialists seemed to have ome ideas on foreign policy. Among them: France would xtricate itself from its economic predicament partly by trengthening its links with the Third World. In Paris it had been fashionable to say that the main problem is the North-South and not the East-West conflict. In the superpower rivalry France was going to judge both sides by its own higher standards, chastising Moscow for its treatment of Solidarity and Washington for bullying the Sandinistas. France would set an example for the West by cutting the arms trade and improving relations with nonaligned countries. How quaint it all seems now. France is mired in Beirut, bogged down in Chad, mercenary in its arms deals with Saudi Arabia. It has done little to oppose Reagan's policies in Central America. It does not even pretend to serve as an example to other nations. With France presiding for six months over the European Economic Community, Mitterrand has been traveling from capital to capital in search of a compromise on the community's economic policy. His chances of forging an independent Western European bloc are incomparably less than were General de Gaulle's.

We can return to the crucial question raised in the first part of this letter: Does the nation-state provide a framework for the construction of socialism? Yes, it provides the initial framework. It is no longer possible to imagine a radical transformation of society limited to one region, say, Lombardy in Italy or Yorkshire in Britain. It is not yet the time when state power in Western Europe will have to be seized in Brussels (except, naturally, for the Belgians). But the frontiers of the nation-state can still be used for the beginning of an experiment. At best it would be a holding operation, however, succeeding only if it were to spread by contagion. A genuinely socialist government, using the safeguard clauses of the Rome Treaty to protect its action, would have to negotiate with its governmental partners and to appeal above their heads to the working people. Whether that alternative is feasible cannot be said with certainty; it has never been tried. The failure of Mitterrand is indivisible, stretching over both domestic and foreign fields. And socialism, to borrow Saint-Just's celebrated remark about happiness, is still "a new idea in Europe." New in the sense of being untried, of really inexisting. □



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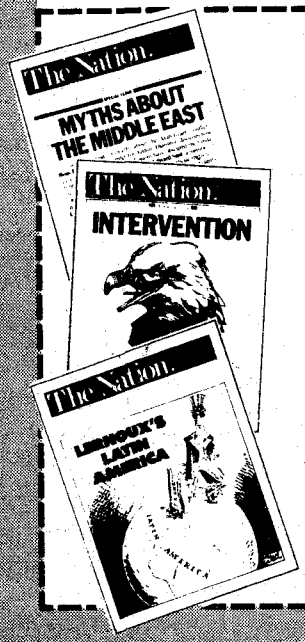

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Analyst Analyzed

JUDITH HERMAN

THE ASSAULT ON TRUTH: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory. *By Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 308 pp. $16.95.*

The victim of an atrocity responds in certain predictable ways. There is a heightening of sensation, so that every impression is registered with intense clarity, and at the same time, a feeling of unreality: "This cannot be happening. I must be dreaming." The terror of the experience persists, returning in vivid, repetitive nightmares, and a feeling of solitude within a dreamlike world may persist for a long time. This is true when the victim is an adult. When the victim is a child, and when the perpetrator is a parent, the break with reality is even more extreme, for the child desperately needs care and comfort from the very person who is tormenting him or her. The defense mechanisms that the child uses are those first named by psychoanalysis: dissociation, denial, repression and, finally, identification with the aggressor: "I was dreaming. It never happened. I remember nothing. I deserved it." Indeed, the very concept of a defense mechanism is one that we owe to psychoanalysis.

These reactions can be observed not only in the mental life of individuals but also in the intellectual life of a society. Unbearable ideas are often erased from public consciousness. And no idea seems to be more unbearable than that cruelty to children is commonplace and tacitly condoned. Because atrocities committed against children arouse overwhelming feelings of helplessness and dread in all of us, those who bear witness to such atrocities are often subjected to a kind of social exorcism.

This is what Freud experienced when he proposed, in his revolutionary paper "The Aetiology of Hysteria" (1896), that the archetypal neurosis of women was caused by forgotten experiences of sexual abuse in childhood. The social implications of this theory were intolerable, for if Freud was correct, then sexual aggressions against children were not unusual acts committed by obvious deviants but were part of the ordinary behavior of respectable family men; and moreover, such assaults were not harmless but led to serious illness. The medical community responded to Freud's exposition of the seduction theory with outrage. He was accused of practicing "old wives' psychiatry," of being taken in by the lies of malicious or deluded hysterics. Freud was ostracized, in effect, for siding with the women (or, as we would now say, identifying with the victim).

There is no doubt that Freud felt like a victim. Two weeks after he delivered the paper, he wrote to his medical colleague and confidant Wilhelm Fliess: "I am as isolated as you could wish me to be: the word has been given out to abandon me, and a void is forming around me." This passage, like many others pertaining to the seduction theory, was expurgated by Freud's followers. The full text is now published for the first time in *The Assault on Truth.*

Jeffrey Masson begins his book by asking why Freud abandoned the seduction theory. To psychoanalytic orthodoxy, this is something akin to questioning the Immaculate Conception or the infallibility of the Pope. Presented with this question, Kurt Eissler, secretary of the Sigmund Freud Archives, could only come up with a tautology:

> You say it was quite obscure why Freud dropped the seduction theory. Well, only when an author replaces a correct theory with an erroneous one is it possible to raise such a question. Is it so surprising that Freud discovered a wrong theory to be wrong?

Anna Freud, in a letter to Masson, stated what has come to be regarded as a central dogma: that Freud repudiated the seduction theory in order to give birth to psychoanalysis. If the seduction theory was true, by implication all of the insights of psychoanalysis would thereby be invalidated:

> Keeping up the seduction theory would mean to abandon the Oedipus complex, and with it the whole importance of phantasy life, conscious or unconscious phantasy. In fact, I think there would have been no psychoanalysis afterwards.

Masson, nevertheless, persisted in raising the question, a persistence that cost him his position as Eissler's heir apparent at the Sigmund Freud Archives. The results of his inquiry are now presented in this fascinating book. His thesis is that Freud succumbed to the social process of repression: that he repudiated the seduction theory not because he had discovered cogent new clinical data that disproved it but because he needed to find reasons to dissociate himself from the (mostly female) victims of socially tolerated sex crimes. As long as he persisted in the seduction theory, Freud was subjected to hostility, scorn and profound ostracism by his medical colleagues, and this, Masson argues, ultimately proved unbearable. Moreover, as Masson speculates, further investigation of the reality of sexual violence against children would have jeopardized Freud's relationship with his idealized mentor, Fliess, the one connection that protected him from feeling utterly alone.

Perhaps too harshly, Masson calls this a "personal failure of courage" on the part of Freud. Here he overestimates the power of individual genius. The secrecy surrounding the male prerogatives of rape and incest has been so tenaciously guarded that only a social movement of women has been capable of breaking it, and that only very recently.

I do not believe that Masson comes up with a definitive answer to the question that he poses—but he is right and courageous to pose it. In the end, we will never know why Freud changed his mind. But once he did—and this Masson demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt—any further consideration of the possible validity of the seduction theory became a heresy within psychoanalysis. Perhaps because the clinical evidence and reasoning that led Freud to abandon the seduction theory turn out to be so astonishingly weak, this vulnerable point in the beginnings of psychoanalysis had to be protected, and its true history suppressed. For this reason, passages of Freud's correspondence indicating continued interest in the seduction theory beyond the official

Judith Herman is a psychiatrist who teaches at Harvard Medical School. She is the author of Father-Daughter Incest *(Harvard University Press).*

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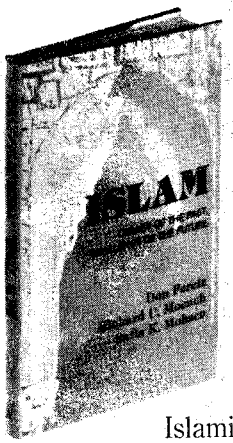

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date of its renunciation—September 21, 1897—were systematically censored by Freud's followers, as was case material pertaining to actual assaults on children. For this reason also, when in later years Sandor Ferenczi, one of Freud's closest disciples, rediscovered the kind of clinical data on which the seduction theory was based, Freud and his other followers responded by setting into motion a process of excommunication.

Ferenczi's last paper (published in 1933), "Confusion of Tongues Between Adults and the Child," like "The Aetiology of Hysteria" a generation earlier, is a brilliant exposition of the psychology of the victim. As Masson aptly writes:

> Perhaps never before had anyone spoken for the abused child with such sympathy and eloquence. The ideas that Freud had propounded to a skeptical medical world in his 1896 papers were here repeated, but expanded through the knowledge gained by analysis. . . .
>
> It is as if Ferenczi were demonstrating to the analytic world how psychoanalysis could have developed had Freud not abandoned the seduction hypothesis.

According to Masson's documentation, Freud and his followers first tried to prevent Ferenczi from delivering the paper at all, and then suppressed its publication in English for seventeen years. The correspondence of the disciples was filled with dismay at Ferenczi's apostasy and with worry that the paper might damage the public image of psychoanalysis. Everyone agreed that the man had taken leave of his senses. There was apparently no discussion whatsoever about the content of the paper. The prominent American analyst A.A. Brill summarized the psychoanalytic position when he wrote to Ernest Jones on August 11, 1933, "I fully agree with you about the publication of his paper. The less said about this whole matter, the better."

Freud wrote to Ferenczi, making it clear to him that his election to the presidency of the International Psycho-Analytic Association was contingent upon his backing down (Ferenczi refused):

> I am sorry that you find it so easy to deprive yourself of the presidency. I would like to insist on it for you. . . . But you must leave the dream-island on which you are living with your fantasy children and once again take part in the struggle of men.

In this demand for recantation, Freud implicitly returned to his early discovery of an undeclared war between men and children. But now, having completed his own process of identification with the aggressor—a process named by Ferenczi—he insisted that Ferenczi also choose the side of men.

It was perhaps inevitable that Masson would suffer the same process of social discredit. While the psychoanalytic establishment finds itself speechless, the press has rushed to its defense. Reviews and articles have been almost uniformly negative. Critics have been preoccupied with ad hominem attacks on Masson or with peripheral arguments (Freud didn't say sexual assault was *always* fantasized, and anyway, psychoanalysis has changed). In the pages of *The New Yorker*, Janet Malcolm portrays Masson as one of Freud's hysterics. We are told a great deal about his appearance, his dress, his flamboyant style, his vanity, his cattiness, his sex life, his troubled relationships and his poor social judgment. We learn almost nothing about his ideas. As Malcolm herself remarks, most of the people who reject Masson seem curiously unconcerned with the intellectual content of his work:

> He had little to say about Masson's position on the seduction theory—in fact, he seemed rather foggy about exactly what the position was. . . . The same could be said of all the other analysts I spoke to who had been friendly with Masson and were no longer on speaking terms with him. In every case, it was a personal issue—not ideology—that had caused the breach.

Unfortunately, many people who have read Malcolm's gossipy account, "Trouble in the Archives," may never read what Masson has to say. Given what has by now become something of a public scandal, those who bother to read *The Assault on Truth* will probably be surprised to discover that the book is a lavishly documented, carefully reasoned work, written in a straightforward, readable style, with only occasional polemical flourishes. The passion of the book is that of a scholar trying to solve a puzzle; only now and then does the voice break to reveal the bewildered outrage and pain of the recently excommunicated disciple.

In the end, of course, one is driven to ask, Why does it matter? Since Freud undeniably repudiated the seduction theory more vigorously with each pass-

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ing year, does it matter much what his original reasons were for doing so? And what if he had not? What if he had been right the first time about the etiology of hysteria? Would that have meant, as Anna Freud asserted, that there could have been no psychoanalysis at all?

Or, rather, could a different sort of psychoanalysis have developed if Freud had not become trapped in the defensive stance of identification with the aggressor? Historically, when Freud repudiated the seduction theory, he repudiated women and went on to elaborate a psychology of men. The sexual and aggressive fantasies of boys and men became the preoccupation of psychoanalysis; the fact that those fantasies were often acted out on the bodies of girls and women became a forbidden area of investigation. Founded on the denial of women's real experiences, orthodox psychoanalysis became a misogynous psychology, deeply committed to a formulation of human development in which women are inherently inferior and female maturity is the willing acceptance of submission and pain.

The influence of psychoanalysis on psychiatric thinking in this country has been so profound that it has created an enormous blind spot within the profession. Not until the 1950s, when radiologist C. Henry Kempe used X-rays to provide incontrovertible proof of physical child abuse, was it possible for the profession to recognize the reality of the "battered child syndrome." The widespread sexual abuse of children took even longer to penetrate psychiatric awareness. Alfred Kinsey and his associates published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* in 1953. In this survey of more than 4,000 women, 25 percent reported a childhood sexual experience with an adult male before the age of 13. Six percent reported a sexual experience with a relative, and 1 percent reported an incestuous experience with their father or stepfather. Nevertheless, more than twenty years later, in 1975, the standard reference work in psychiatry (Freedman and Kaplan's *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*) was still estimating the prevalence of all forms of incest at *one case per million*. Failure to recognize the reality of physical and sexual abuse of children continues to result in the misdiagnosis and mistreatment of numerous women and children who turn to psychiatrists seeking help as a consequence of their victimization, only to relive their original nightmare as they discover

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that the psychiatrist is in conscious or unconscious collusion with the offender. Despite recent publicity about incest, psychiatric horror stories are still common.

Freud's discoveries of the unconscious and of childhood sexual fantasy arose from a dialectical process in which an earlier discovery, the sexual victimization of children, was sacrificed. Surely, almost a hundred years later, it is possible to advance psychoanalytic thought to the point of synthesis. The facts of sexual abuse of children are by now so well documented as to be beyond the power of social denial. Too many women have spoken out, and empowered by the women's movement, more victims daily are breaking the silence. But the most important insights of psychoanalysis are in no way incompatible with acceptance of the reality of sexual violence, or any other social reality. It is time for psychoanalysis to free itself from the neurotic re-enactment of its history. □

Relax, You're Normal

DANIEL MENAKER

AMERICAN COUPLES: Money, Work, Sex. *By Philip Blumstein, Ph.D., and Pepper Schwartz, Ph.D. William Morrow. 656 pp. $19.95.*

Lila and Gino, Irwin and Marcy, Sunshine and Suzanne, Pierre and Randolph, Lowell and Cleo, Otis and Jon—just a sample of the hundreds of pseudonymous duos who participated in the survey that resulted in *American Couples*, a much-discussed study of twosomes' attitudes toward money, work and sex. Philip Blumstein and Pepper Schwartz's generalizations and findings are usually less than gripping: "There are many factors in couples' lives that we felt might affect their relationship"; "Children complicate the situation"; "Families are in a significant state of flux"; "Money management is a likely area of conflict for couples"; "Kissing occurs usually, though not always, when couples have sex."

On the basis of such oatmeal, one could argue that the most interesting thing about *American Couples* is its monikers, starting with those of the authors. In making up names to protect their subjects' privacy, Phil and Pepper have a gift for choosing unlikely combinations: Lauren and Blair, Curt and Mitzi, Chuck and Deanna. As I read I found myself humming the Beatles' "Ob-La-Di." At first I thought it was because so much of what the authors and the couples say is so boring: Pauline and Bart, a cohabiting couple, believe in "sexual freedom" and "a life without games"; Milo and Estelle are a married couple who are "proud of each others' successes"; Lawrence and Bernard, two gay men, have "come to an agreement about which areas of the household each finds interesting, and . . . have amicably divided the shopping." But the unconscious, that slyboots, had outwitted me once again. "Ob-La-Di" was driving me so crazy I had to put aside this earnest, optimistic sociology and sing the whole thing through; it was only then that I realized that what had set it off was the handles of its heroes: Desmond and Molly. Once I had exorcised them and their ditty, I could return to Janet and Marnie, Felix and Lea, Winston and Gail.

American Couples is built upon thousands of questionnaire responses and hundreds of interviews with married folk, cohabiting heterosexuals, gay pairs and lesbian couples. It's filled with bar graphs that represent the statistical basis for the overwhelming number of conclusions drawn. For instance, 40 percent of the male cohabitants surveyed are highly committed to a future with their cohabitette and favor pooling financial resources, while only 33 percent of female cohabitants envision walking off into the sunset sharing a joint account with the man in their life. Hmm. So there *are* some interesting finds mixed in with the many yawnable ones. Male cohabitants, take warning. But even when the reader's eyes happen to be opened by the odd finding, he had better view it with some skepticism, since a tiny note in the back of the book admits that "the way in which participants were sought did not guarantee a sample representative of the population of the United States" and it would be misleading if the results were applied "to all groups within the country." One can't help wondering what value the book's findings may have when such admissions are taken together with the fact that for the separate interviews that Phil and Pepper considered indispensable for objectivity (along with joint ones), "some couples had only one suitable room, and so several interviews were conducted without heat, or with a flashlight, in backyards and even bathrooms." The authors go on, hilariously, "We came to call these our bathtub interviews."

The whole thing reads like some strange hybrid of science (if sociology is in fact a science), *My Secret Garden*, Shere Hite and the notes of a studiously nonmoralistic therapist, and it's hard to take seriously. It also typifies this country's fascination with data, no matter how flawed; "research," even when done in a bathtub; and dubious findings against which one can set one's own condition. The last may best explain why this elaborate and probably unreliable study, like the quizzes and assessments in *Cosmopolitan*, has received so much attention: we love to check ourselves out, even against uncertain generalizations, even when we know we won't recall anything we've pseudo-learned the minute we put the charts and graphs aside.

That's why so many heterosexual married reviewers scurried to the section on sex to read that most married couples make love at least once a week. That must have temporarily put the pressure on or taken it off a lot of members of the book-reviewing public and their mates. Gay men and lesbians were probably less than staggered by the news that, like heterosexual couples, they do more housework if they are not fully employed. But some high-paid, competitive lesbian may have been slightly disturbed to read that most of her breed in the survey "do not use income to establish dominance in their relationships," while two gays living together as happy equals although one makes a lot of money and the other doesn't may have wondered whether something was wrong with them when they read that "in gay male couples, income is an extremely important force in determining which partner will be dominant." Other potential comparison-provokers: "Men are less possessive than women because they are more powerful"; "Only lesbian couples do not let physical beauty affect their happiness"; "Husbands enjoy their work

Daniel Menaker is an editor at The New Yorker *and is one-half of an American couple.*

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more than cohabiting men do." Other eye-glazers: "Fighting about the intrusion of work into the relationship can undermine a couple's satisfaction"; "Married couples who disagree about the wife's right to work have less happy relationships."

I don't suppose this kind of book does any lasting harm or good, though the authors express the hope that "the findings of this study will help a couple identify roles and develop understandings that will help make their relationship satisfactory and long-lasting." It's all extremely American, this belief in guidelines and improvement, this nonjudgmentalism (the authors substitute the horrendous word "non-monogamy" for "infidelity") and, most of all, this conviction that when you ask people questions about themselves they'll know the true answer and, what's more, give it to you. For instance, the authors appear to take at face value the following statement by Art, husband of Marlene: "I would say that I make the decisions when it comes to money and I guess I would also say that if there is an argument and we cannot totally work it out so that we both agree, then I have more to say in the relationship." Art may believe that, the authors may believe it, even poor, seemingly benighted Marlene may believe it, but there's something in Art's diction that makes him sound less than ironfisted to me. And what do the authors make of responses like "As a friend of mine used to tell me, if you took a piggy bank and put a nickel in for every time you had sex during the first year of your marriage, and then did it for the second year, you would have saved less and less money as the years went on"? Seems this woman is far more interesting syntactically than sexually, or at least her friend is. But Phil and Pepper treat everyone as data fodder and pay no attention to the nuances and false notes and humor that must constitute the real personalities of these American couples. "His genitals don't attract me in and of itself," one wife reports. "It's who's attached to genitalia that I care about. Who owns it, who's wearing it. . . . I like going down on him. It makes him feel good, truly good. I don't find it unpleasant. I don't say I wish I could do it all the time. I don't equate it with a sale at Bloomingdale's. That I could do all the time. But it's not like going to the dentist either. It's between two extremes. Closer to Bloomingdale's than to the dentist." How can one do justice

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to such a person in a bar graph? Or to Lawrence, who wanted to wear "a pair of gym shorts and that's it" to a Christmas party he and his lover, Bernard, were giving? (Bernard thought that was "exceedingly rude, to wear nothing but gym shorts to your own Christmas party." Lawrence dressed.) It's sad to see how few such bright moments there are in *American Couples*—how many of the people interviewed have adopted the kind of vocabulary that too often characterizes their context: "Bea is in the heterosexual model of being very orgasm-oriented"; "Our approaches are different. Mine's apt to be passive and manipulative. Hers is confrontive and manipulative"; "We had not been communicating well"; "We didn't think we were having enough quality time together." That's the kind of thing that may get you humming "Ob-La-Di" in about ten seconds; not only do Desmond and Molly have names as interesting as those in *American Couples*, but a great deal is revealed about them in two jargon-free lines: "Desmond stays at home and does his pretty face/and in the evening she's a singer with the band." □

High-Heeled Women

LAURA SHAPIRO

FEMININITY. *By Susan Brownmiller. Linden Press/Simon & Schuster. 270 pp. $14.95.*

There is nothing to be learned from Susan Brownmiller's new book, but it does raise at least one deeply puzzling question: What happened here? In her lively career as reporter, scholar, writer, thinker and activist, Brownmiller has been making admirable contributions for years to contemporary feminism, most prominently with her immense, groundbreaking study of rape, *Against Our Will*. Now she has produced a second book, *Femininity*, which purports to—well, I'm not sure what it purports to do.

In a string of short chapters titled "Hair," "Clothes," "Voice" and so forth, Brownmiller skips along with a great armful of clichés and truisms and scatters them like rose petals until they're all gone. If we keep trudging behind her, from "Body" all the way to "Ambition," we will pick up such frail insights as "Samson's uncut hair was the secret source of his fabled power, as the wicked Delilah discovered"; "Fashion and shopping add fanciful touches to feminine speech. . . . A woman speaks in familiar terms of taupe and oat, of plum, aubergine, mauve and mulberry"; "Bearded women have been exhibited as sideshow freaks in the circus"; and "Love makes the world go round. . . . But more important, sex for a woman . . . has reproductive consequences that render the act a serious affair."

After laboring with the most horrendous forms of misogyny in *Against Our Will*, Brownmiller might have turned to a more playful topic and a lighter style with understandable relief. But the superficial ideas, perfunctory analyses and who-cares information that she has assembled here show little respect for her subject and even less for her readers. Every observation seems to have fallen directly from notecard to page, where it sits unadorned by research or imagination, leaning on a puffed-up writing style. "Named for an obscure Pacific atoll that was used for atomic testing, the bikini was considered wildly daring in the Fifties," she tells us, but if there is a bit of history or even a joke connecting the bathing suit with the atoll, we never learn it. Movie stars "skyrocket to fame" and "catapult to stardom"; black lace underwear is compared with white cotton; and once in a while Brownmiller runs a sentence backward—"Writes Jacqueline Sachs . . . ," "Wrote Ida Husted Harper . . . "—in a maneuver that always seems to represent the last desperate gurgle of a reporter with nothing to report.

Most distressing of all, in some ways, is Brownmiller's use of her own experience as a primary source. Sections of *Femininity* sound as though Brownmiller were interviewing herself for *People*, letting the world know that she first wanted a bra as a flat-chested teen-ager, that she now dyes her hair but decided to stop shaving her legs, that she's ambivalent about perfume and that she likes to "relax on the sofa in a kittenish curl." Self-absorption may still have a place in feminist literature, but this kind of vaporous intimacy has not been enlightening for at least a decade.

Indeed, the whole book seems wildly out of date. Except for a reference to Nancy Reagan, there's hardly a page that couldn't have been printed twenty or thirty years ago, when the mere notion of posing questions about lipstick and high heels would have been sufficiently provocative to fill a volume. Possibly Brownmiller believes that the 1980s have arrived only on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and that women elsewhere in the country are still living in the pink bliss of the 1950s, where they have to be served the intellectual equivalent of Jell-O lest they shriek and throw the book away. But even authorial condescension on that order does not explain why Brownmiller would write, "Women know how to laugh appreciatively. . . . but most of us are rotten at telling jokes," or how she could conclude, "In a sense, men are right. The women's movement has no sense of humor." That isn't feminism made easy. It's just dumb. More baffling yet is the attitude reflected in Brownmiller's discussion of corsets and foot-binding, where she makes reference to the theory that "men find deep sexual excitement in the hobbling of women." No sooner is this suggestion out, however, than she rushes to apologize for it: "Such a statement is darkly inflammatory but impossible to dismiss." Of course it's impossible to dismiss! Once upon a time, she wrote the book on it.

I don't know why Susan Brownmiller didn't choose to write a real book about femininity instead of this one. Maybe someone convinced her that people don't read real books anymore. Maybe someone convinced her that if you want to reach an audience you have to walk right up to the table, introduce yourself with a sincere smile and describe all the ingredients in the ratatouille. Lots of writers do that nowadays, and so successfully that nobody seems to care what's on the plate. But Brownmiller's old fans are going to care, and they're going to miss her very much when they read *Femininity*. □

Laura Shapiro's articles and reviews have appeared in Mother Jones, Rolling Stone, The Atlantic *and other publications.*

March of Dimes
SAVES BABIES

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BOOK NOTES.

AMY PERSHING

GOD'S POCKET. *By Pete Dexter. Random House. 274 pp. $14.95.* If there were a National Book Award for best opening paragraph, it would undoubtedly go to Pete Dexter for "Leon Hubbard died ten minutes into lunch break on the first Monday in May, on the construction site of the new one-story trauma wing at Holy Redeemer Hospital in South Philadelphia. One way or the other, he was going to lose the job." Everything that is good about *God's Pocket*, Dexter's first novel, is in those two sentences: the detail, the location, the humor, the word "trauma," even the way Leon's loss of life is secondary to the idea of loss of livelihood.

God's Pocket is about the effect of the death (murder, actually) of one vile, psychopathic young man on those who knew (or thought they knew) him: Leon's mother, Jeanie, a vain, reflexively flirtatious woman whose only true emotion is her love for her very unlovely son; Leon's stepfather, the semiliterate Mickey—the real hero of this novel—who is constantly thwarted in his attempt to prove his devotion to Jeanie by burying her son properly; an alcoholic, washed-up newspaperman, who thinks he has found in Jeanie a woman empty enough to stuff with his dreams; and the neighborhood, God's Pocket, a working-class enclave of intense pride.

The structure of the novel is odd, meandering among too many characters and leading up to a climax of sheer and unaffecting melodrama. And though Dexter's ear for Philly speech is uncanny, everyone from truck driver to newspaper publisher talks the same way. Nonetheless, *God's Pocket* is a tough, funny, articulate book about violent, sad, tragically inarticulate people.

CLOSE-UPS. *By Sandra Thompson. The University of Georgia Press. 104 pp. $12.95.* This first collection of short stories by the winner of the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction is a deft and vivid account of the emotional stages in a woman's life. This subject all too often inspires writers to moods of melancholy introspection or noisy self-pity. But Sandra Thompson—with her O'Connor-like subtlety and eye for the grotesque ("She was told not to expect much: that her newborn child would look like a veal roast")—prefers to write deceptively quiet pieces that periodically kick out with deadly accuracy.

When we first meet the heroine (sometimes "I," sometimes "she," sometimes "Sally"), she's a teen-ager overwhelmed by the heavy masculinity of her first lover (the Big Goof). We follow her metamorphosis into a brittle, defensive woman who leaves a loving first husband "on all four occasions, to my mind, just in the nick of time. The suspense would have been too much." There is a miserable second marriage ("As far I can see, there are cars . . . driven too fast by men, their wives silent beside them"), and the unexpected epiphany of motherhood ("[It] is what she had imagined falling in love might be like"). Thompson is at her best when she deals with the funny, scary tyranny of children over even the most authoritarian types, like the second husband:

> "I'll bring you a Kit Kat."
> "I don't want Kit Kat. I want Kit Tac."
> "Oh, you want Tic Tacs?"
> "I want a Kit Tac!" She screams emphasis on the last syllable.
> Her father looks at me. "Does she want a Kit Kat or Tic Tacs?"

All in all, a strong, sometimes devastating but ultimately hopeful collection by an exciting and gifted writer.

WATCHING THE DETECTIVES. *By Julian Rathbone. Pantheon. 232 pp. $13.95.* Julian Rathbone's *Watching the Detectives* is his third thriller to feature the good Commissioner Jan Argand of Brabt (a fictitious country located somewhere between Holland and Belgium). This time, the all-powerful Secretary Prinz has named Argand to head a fledgling bureau to investigate complaints of police harassment. A decent, conservative, middle-aged policeman, Argand does not relish his new job, the sorts of people he finds himself defending (nude Marxists, union activists, homosexuals) or the fact that the group he seems to be coming up against the most (the Movement for Moral Regeneration) is one whose aims he would normally applaud. Nonetheless, he is finally, reluctantly convinced that the movement has definite National Socialist tendencies. Appalled, he pursues the wrong-doers, his view sometimes narrow, his conclusions often dead wrong, but his sense of justice unwavering.

Argand is a wonderful, solid character, and Brabt, with its complicated parliamentary maneuverings and its politically polarized citizens, is uncomfortably real. But *Watching the Detectives* has one big problem: for a "novel of suspense," there is a conspicuous lack of just that. The book is to a large extent a study of manipulation: industry uses Christian rhetoric to hoodwink the middle class; the left capitalizes on the antinuclear movement; the head of the military police recruits soldiers for fascism; an aging academic seduces his young admirers in the name of Marx. Manipulating them all, however, is the smooth and coldly amoral Secretary Prinz, who has decided—for unstated reasons of his own—against a right-wing takeover. And what Prinz wants, Prinz will get. He knows it, Argand knows it, we know it. And this otherwise fine book suffers for it. □

Amy Pershing is a freelance writer and a former assistant literary editor of The Nation.

JAZZ.

PETER WATROUS

Popular hits have a habit of padding along after jazz musicians, nagging to get played. Little did Billy Strayhorn know when he wrote "Take the A Train" that Duke Ellington was going to have to play it, along with a string of other hits, night after night until his death in 1974. The recently released *Duke Ellington All Star Road Band* (Doctor Jazz W2X39137) was recorded in June 1957 at a one-night stand at a whistle stop in rural Pennsylvania. On it, you find Ellington's answer to the problem: tinker a little with the harmony here, do a little singing there, expand the solos, let alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges sweep a helpless melody off its tiny feet, sneak in a few new tunes, have a good time and let the tunes relax and sag comfortably like an old house. By 1957, the band had played concerts all around the world and was sounding better than it had in five years; Ellington had just finished one of his finest suites, "Such Sweet

Peter Watrous writes about music for The Village Voice *and* OP.

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Thunder." And though he was giving the audience what it wanted—his hits and pop songs to dance to—he did it without a hint of condescension, producing music equal, in relaxed density and sophistication, to anything he did in the 1950s.

On *All Star*, Ellington introduces an instrumental version of "A Train" as a request from the audience, but what the audience gets isn't the carefully sculpted hit of 1941. This "A Train" is almost a fanfare, brassily reharmonized, with new rhythms and new melodies that turn simple interjections into baroque twists and turns. Ellington spreads out his trademark four-bar piano introduction into almost two choruses of stream-of-consciousness soloing, including off-handed snatches of the melody, a bop theme, some boogie and his own "I'm Beginning to See the Light." Cornetist Ray Nance plays parts of the solo that made his reputation on the original version, retaining the unabashed romanticism that makes "A Train" one of Ellington's masterpieces.

To make sure the audience gets the point, Ellington parades Nance back to the front of the stage for a vocal version of "A Train." What ensues is something like Buñuel's Mexican westerns, commercial but eccentric. Nance sings the lyrics for a chorus, scats a bit, overlays some blues lyrics ("I ain't mad at you, pretty baby, don't be mad at me"), then sings snippets from "I Cover the Waterfront," "Rocking Chair," "Sweet Georgia Brown," some bop and "Yankee Doodle Dandy" (!), all with the band shouting back the lyrics. Smart move: the audience loves it and it fires up the band. Even smarter: it only lasts two minutes and fifty seconds.

In Johnny Hodges, Ellington had the perfect way of dispensing pop songs without being patronizing. On *All Star*, the band plays a short introduction to the thuddingly banal "All of Me," and excepting a few snorts from the band during the solo and a short closing ensemble melee, Ellington unleashes Hodges on the melody. The result is a kind of musical resurrection, with Hodges blithely taking on the melody and wrestling it into life.

While Ellington introduces "On the Sunny Side of the Street" someone in the audience shouts, "Too much pop, Duke." In one respect, the man's right: it's not a very challenging program. But the music is so ripe and exuberant, his gripe seems irrelevant.

The career of baritone saxophonist Heywood Henry—Harry Carney's substitute in the Ellington band—is an accurate enough account of what an unrecognized life in the jazz underground is like. In 1934, Henry joined what became the Erskine Hawkins Orchestra, staying with them for twenty years. The Hawkins big band was a popular, hard-swinging group with a few hits; rock-and-roll sank it like a stone. Henry, like many other exceptionally talented musicians in big bands, had little or no name-value and was forced into making a living playing rock-and-roll. From the late 1950s through the late 1970s, Henry supported himself working with Earl Hines and Sy Oliver, in pit bands on Broadway and occasionally in engagements at New York clubs.

Fifty years of undeserved obscurity is good enough cause for bitterness, and it's a tribute to the regenerative powers of Afro-American music and to Henry himself that his first album, *The Gentle Monster* (UP 27.13), is filled with abundant kindness, wit and happiness. Henry plays the transition style between swing and bop—best known through musicians like saxophonist Don Byas and pianist Clyde Hart—that used to be found on 52nd Street and in Harlem in the early 1940s. He glides through slickly riffing up-tempo songs and makes heart-wrenching sense out of ballads. I'm glad the record's out. It's a shame it took so long. □

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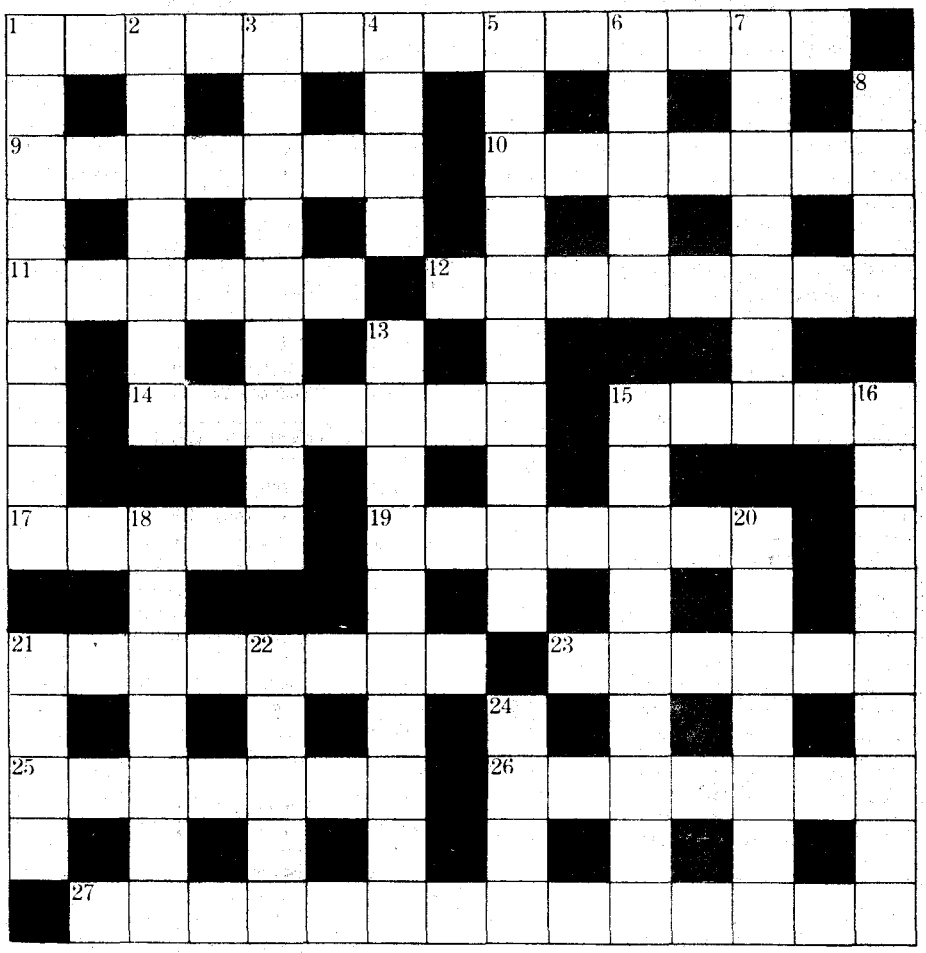
Crossword Puzzle No. 1999

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 *S'habillant*—with salad? (6,8)
9 and 21 across Direct way to finance your trip abroad? (7,2,6)
10 To make a mistake ain't wrong around it, if you can see the lay of the land. (7)
11 Visionary? (Jay would make it funny!) (6)
12 Not a native tiger-man in the making. (8)
14 Eccentric or not, you'll find it's old hat there! (7)
15 Check on Jock—it's quietly put down. (5)
17 More precisely agreeable? (5)
19 Goes on the road, perhaps, and takes part. (4,3)
21 See 9
23 Certainly not like 12, being native and brined, cut up. (6)
25 Play daringly this way. (7)
26 Otherwise detains—otherwise? (7)
27 The eye might be private in it. (9,5)

DOWN

1 Took a liking to, as one might say, loose women—Abou loved his! (6,3)
2 Invest with responsibility. (7)
3 The young one is Charlie, my darling! (Leave rich out of it!) (9)
4 Do we ultimately return to it? (4)
5 Coming out of state mines and French public houses. (10)
6 If you want a spray, point to a self-righteous one. (5)
7 Falls like a white grape. (7)
8 Not, by the sound of it, to be tied. (4)
13 Turned into a batch of what might be living together. (10)
15 Not amateur knowledge of spiritual things—it might be good if you're getting better! (9)
16 Dice might be shaken with deadly results without a definitely final answer. (9)
18 You could possibly find one on a 14—it might be chicken to take a drink! (7)
20 Poor, poor Ted! (It might cause that sinking feeling!) (7)
21 The little brothers might be somewhat disturbed in certain spheres. (4)
22 Proving there's a point to a difficult duet, such as one of those piano studies. (5)
24 In the park, I even see a Russian place! (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1998

S	P	E	A	K	S	O	F	T	L	Y	A	N	D	■
H	■	M	■	I	■	M	■	A	■	A	■	O	■	A
I	M	P	U	L	S	E	■	S	I	N	G	I	N	G
P	■	E	■	O	■	N	■	K	■	K	■	S	■	O
S	T	R	U	M	S	■	S	M	A	S	H	I	N	G
T	■	O	■	E	■	A	■	A	■	■	■	E	■	■
H	■	R	A	T	I	N	G	S	■	V	I	R	T	U
A	■	■	■	E	■	E	■	T	■	I	■	■	■	N
T	U	B	E	R	■	S	T	E	E	L	E	R	■	I
■	■	R	■	■	■	T	■	R	■	L	■	O	■	O
T	H	E	N	I	G	H	T	■	P	A	S	S	I	N
Y	■	C	■	H	■	E	■	D	■	G	■	S	■	J
P	A	C	K	E	R	S	■	A	M	E	R	I	C	A
E	■	I	■	A	■	I	■	L	■	R	■	N	■	C
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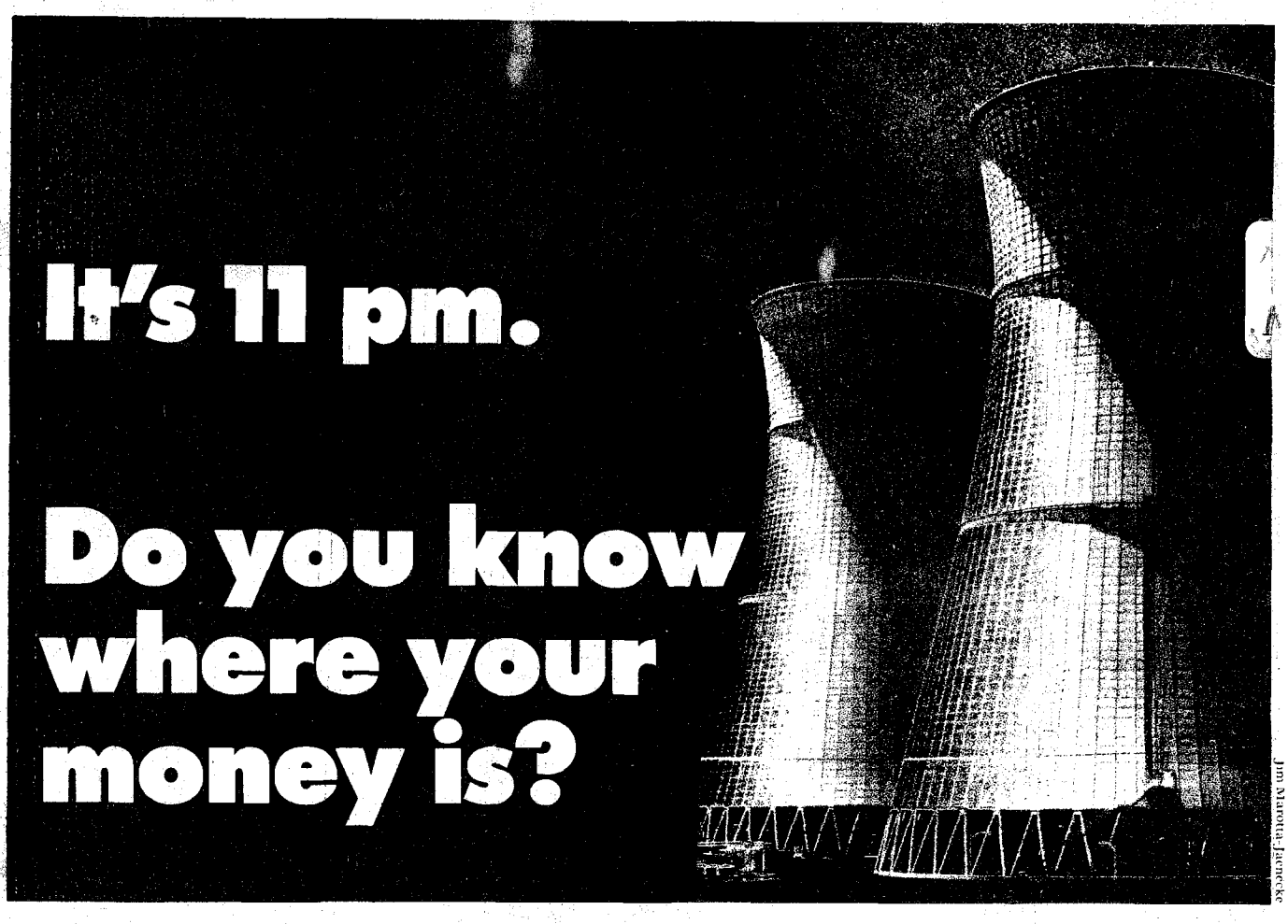

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